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INTRODUCTION

This volume contains papers which were read at Rabindranath and Indian Literatures Conference, held at Santiniketan in August, 1961. The conference which marked the second phase of centenary celebrations lasted for a week, from the 8th August to the 14th August, 1961. Two representatives of each of the 15 Indian literatures—Assamese, Bengali, Punjabi, Oriya, Marathi, Gujrati, Malayalam, Kashmiri, Tamil, Telegu, Kanarese, Sanskrit, Sindhi, Hindi and Urdu were invited to participate in the conference as speakers. Besides some eminent litterateurs were approached to deliver special lectures. The response to the invitation was sponteneous and almost all agreed to to participate in the conference. Some invitees however could not come on account of illness or some unavoidable circumstances but they sent their papers which were read Amongst them were Sri Ratnakanta Barkakati, Sri C. Kunhan Raja, Sri G. Sankara Kurup, Prof Hazari Prasad Dwivedi.

We had seven sessions in all. On the average each session was devoted to two literatures. The special lectures which were delivered by Sri Mulk Raj Anand and Sri Debesh Das were covered in the last session. Sri K. M. Munshi inaugurated the conference. Sri S. R. Das, Upacharya, Visva-Bharati, extended a warm welcome to the delegates and Sri Santosh Chandra Sen Gupta, the convener, in his report explained the purpose and the scope of the conference. The papers read and the lectures delivered extempore in all number twenty-eight. All of them except Prof. Kshetres Chatterjee's paper on 'Rabindranath and Sanskrit literature' and Sri Yaspal's lecture on "Rabindranath and Hindi literature" (which I have not as yet received) are published An attempt has been made to print them as far as possible in the order in which they were presented in the conference Sri K. M. Munshi's lecture on "Rabindranath and Gujrati literature" and Sri Mulk Raj Anand's special lecture were tape-recorded

and they are presented in this volume in the form of summaries. Sri Harekrishna Mukherji's paper is published in the language in which it was read. The paper is such that it can not be easily rendered into a foreign medium.

At this conference an attempt was made at showing the impact of the thought and the genius of Rabindranath Tagore on as many as 14 literatures and therefore its scope was wide enough. The published papers inspite of the natural difference in the approach to the subject and in the style of exposition, evince an identical reverence for the memory of Rabindranath Tagore and a common earnestness to establish the influence of his thought and work on the Indian literatures. The nature and the extent of this impact however have not been the same. The literatures have been influenced in different ways and in varying degrees. An enquiry into the reasons for this difference which does not, strictly speaking, come under the scope of this volume deserves research. This interesting study of the relation between Rabindranath and the Indian literatures reveals certain significant facts about both. One such fact which is indeed unfortunate and which the poet himself deplored is that the impact of Rabindranath on many Indian literatures was occasioned by his recognition in the West in the form of the award of the Nobel prize. Moreover, the medium of contact of a number of Indian literatures with the literature of Rabindranath is English translation. We find that the renderings of his works into some of the languages have been done from the English translations. This acquaintance with the poet via a foreign medium naturally has been a handicap of some of the literatures. The discovery of important cultural links between Bengal and other states is one notable feature of this work.

This volume contains contributions from eminent litterateurs

of India and as such will be of great interest to the readers. It is all the more significant as it rightly yields the impression of the unity of the Indian literatures. The unity is essentially of the Indian mind itself which is represented in our literature and philosophy. What is important is that this unity fulfils itself through difference. This is why we find that different systems of philosophy in India co-exist as distinct patterns of thought and yet agree on certain basic beliefs and derive them from one source. This is also equally true of the Indian literatures. The fact that one single creative mind made its effective impact on the diverse literatures is one sure evidence for their inherent unity.

I convey my grateful thanks to all who assisted me in the organisation of Rabindranath and Indian literatures conference and also in the publication of its proceedings.

SANTOSH CHANDRA SENGUPTA

Convener

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INAUGURAL ADDRESS

K. M. Munshi

My ignorance of the Bengali language has denied me the privilege of reading Gurudev's works in the original Whatever I have read of his works is from their English, Gujarati or Hindi translations But, I do not propose to speak on them So much has been said about Gurudev and his works by competent persons during the last few months that it would be presumptuous on my part to go over the same ground.

I, therefore, propose to speak today generally of Gurudev and the Indian Renaissance, as also of his place in the history of the mind and soul of man in the context of the present day world

The Indian Renaissance, like all such phenomena, was the product of the impact of the alien culture of the West on the old and indigenous one of India.

In the first stage, such an impact liberates the mind and soul of the receiving culture from the thraldom of the past In the next stage it drives sensitive men to go in search of the fundamental values of the receiving culture if it has any vitality left, and invest them with fresh creative vigour. If the culture has no vitality left, it is so overwhelmed that it loses its creative energy

In the third stage of the impact, the new values of the impacting culture are softened down, modified and absorbed under the pressure of the freshly recaptured vigour of the older values. Then they only serve to fertilise the mind, leading to an outburst of all-round creative activity. This we call Renaissance

In the first stage, the sensitive men of the receiving culture become rebels, in the second, seekers after a new synthesis ; in the third, creators of new and vital forms of thought, expression, art and values.

The British conquest brought to this unhappy land relief in two forms ; lasting peace and the impact of the West The

Indian mind, freed from the fear of centuries, became receptive to new influences. Contact with England and the English education introduced in the country, broadened our horizon.

At the same time, European scholars — and following them Indian scholars — unearthed the vanished glories of Indian thought, literature and religion. This provided the Indian mind with a consciousness of continuity and a proud source of inspiration.

In the early decades of the twentieth century when this process of liberation began, the sensitive mind of India was in the grip of mediaevalism. Its dominant note was other-worldliness. Its literature sang of the afflictions and snares of this life and of the ways to escape from them. This left little scope for the self-expression of the individual.

The impact of the West brought with it the spirit of the European Renaissance. We were made heirs to the mental freedom, aesthetic sensibility and sympathetic understanding which that phenomenon had released. We also awoke, as did post-Renaissance Europe in the 16th and 17th centuries, to the beauties and joys of life and to the right of man to be himself regardless of conventional restraints. English literature of the nineteenth century also provided new inspiration to the university men in India who took to Shakespeare and Scott, Byron, Shelley and Keats, and to the histories of Greece and Rome with avid enthusiasm.

In intensity the Indian movement was not like the liberalising movement in Europe. It was not followed by the unrestrained pouring forth of vital energy in forms of dazzling beauty. But it had a liberating influence all right — a liberation from the thraldom of mediaeval traditions and techniques. However, those who felt the force of the impact in the first glow of enthusiasm became rebels like Narmad (1833-1886), the first poet in modern Gujarati literature. Carried away by the force of the

impact, he alternated between hope and disappointment—always impressionable, tempestuous, egotistic, courageous and sentimental.

With the next generation coming out of the British-established universities, the movement reached the second stage. Their gifted products turned to their own language for self-expression. Deeply influenced by English literature, they drew upon the beauties of Sanskrit classics, and some of them even sought the inspiration of the ageless Upanishads The creative energy which this fusion produced laid the foundation of our Renaissance

Bankim was the foremost pioneer of this new movement, in fact, the prototype of such gifted men in several parts of the country He tried to recapture the beauty of Sanskrit literature Drawing upon the inexhaustible linguistic resources of Sanskrit, he made Bengali a vehicle of rich expressive power

At the same time, he softened the influence of the West without losing its inspiring value His creative urge found expression in terms of the joys of this life He invoked with reverence the glory and heroism of the past, responded to the joys and sorrows of the present and transfused them to the future by the power of his creative imagination.

Bankim exercised great influence on the literature of several regions in the country. His *Durgesh Nandini* and *Visha Vriksha* were beacon lights which lighted the horizon of romantic literature throughout India. His *Anandamath* gave the message which the country was waiting for, motherland was to be worshipped as the Divine Mother, martyrdom to achieve her freedom was the highest form of Karma Yoga. In this way, Bankim taught us to shed our inferiority complex and stand unabashed, proud of what we were and firm in our resolve to do our duty in the present undeterred by fear

In spite of the diversity of languages in the country, its litera-

ture has, at all times, been inspired by one common unifying impulse. *The Mahabharta*, *Ramayana*, *Bhagvat* and *Gita Govind* had, age after age, exercised influence over all literatures in the country. The same thing happened in the modern period when in many parts of the country gifted men took to literature under the influence of the English literature of the Romantic school. These founders of the new movement, in their works, gave positive expression to the modern attitude to life which accepts the actions and reactions of the human heart as fundamental Breaking away from the past, they showed the courage to face the emotional, intellectual and spiritual facts of life as they were. They re-defined man's relationship to men, man's relationship to super-natural powers and man's relationship to women, and made the inner life of the individual the central theme of literature.

When Rabindranath began his literary career in the 80's of the last century, he was the child of the Indian Renaissance though from the start he represented the culmination of its tradition, method, style and mood. But even in his youthful works, he out-distanced other authors in feeling, outlook and technical mastery. His sensitive mind also shrank from the loud elements of the early Renaissance literature. The arrogance of the rebel and the tumult of the restless were foreign to his nature. As the poet produced work after work, he gathered confidence, his art became well nigh perfect, his self-restraint savoured of the classical and his delicacy of touch was inimitable

In and after 1904, Rabindranath was the poet of that flaming nationalism of which Sri Aurobindo was the militant apostle. His nationalism, however, was not chauvinistic. He could never harbour hate against the foreigner, though his faith in India's mission to give the world a message of peace and the strength of the Spirit was unbounded.

The voice of the Poet was to longer the mere voice of Indian

freedom His became the authentic voice of Asia seeking emancipation from political bondage as also from the self-aggrandising nationalism of the West His songs therefore found their echo in the hearts of men in India as well as in Japan, China and several countries of South-east Asia

The highly receptive mind of the Poet gathered its impulses from the East and the West His mind responded to beauty from whatever source it came—whether it was literary, artistic or spiritual

Now he was no longer the poet of the Indian Renaissance His vision, which came to embrace the world in which there was no Asia and no Europe, glowed with the luminous colours of the basic human nature He stood forth as a poet of the 'universal man', viewing human personality as expressed in every variety of form, and began to build the fabric of beauty not only with words but with sounds and shapes

The Poet's aesthetic sensibility developed endless variety in perception, emotion and social graces and found an intimate kinship with nature and men His exquisite touch reflected an untiring search of beauty which ever yearned and yet was never satiated — thereby developing an ethereal quality which, among modern poets, one finds only in Goethe

The Poet's stature grew with age Asserting the supremacy of the Spirit over passions and emotions, he responded to the call of the joys of the senses as much as to the sweetness of human relations and the timeless aspirations for Beauty which fades not and for Love which, in the words of Shri Krishna, 'see Me in all, and all in Me'.

The Lord in the *Bhagavadgita* has said that the seers are either *Munis* or *Kavis* "I am Vyas young the *Munis* and Ushanas among the *Kavis*." मुनीनामप्यहं व्यासः कवीनामुशना कविः In the highest sense of the terms Gurudev was the *Kavi* of the modern world.

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On this occasion, therefore, I cannot pay a more appropriate tribute than the one given to him by Anesaki in the *Golden Book*.

Lo ! a glitter of light,
The purple gleaming at the apex of the Himalaya !
Who doubts that it shall finally pervade the plains of the Ganga ?
Quickened by the first touch of the rising Sun,
The *Pundarika* lotus opens its petals,
Harbouring the life of heaven in its lustre and scent.

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RABINDRANATH AND PUNJABI LITERATURE

TRILOCHAN SINGH

RABINDRANATH by his prophetic consciousness, his broad and liberal vision, his fondness for the spiritual and the universal and by his vast and lasting contributions to Indian and world thought in the field of literature, religion, education, music and art has built the rock foundation of modern Indian literature. He is unquestionably the Father of modern Indian literature and the fountain head of Indian renaissance. While living he was the conscience of India; after his death he is, for all times the conscience of humanity

Although Tagore was the noblest heir to the great Indian traditions in literature he was no parrot of ancient wisdom He brought out of it the great spiritual wisdom of our Rishis, Saints, Acharyas aud Gurus and reinterpreted them in modern terms with a modern world perspective, showing its truth and applicability even today He synthesised into a harmonious whole the old and the new, the past and the persent.

Rabindranath Tagore's writings project timeless universal truths Essentially they are the same truths that were voiced by Buddha, the Upanisad poets, Jesus and the Sikh Gurus. Tagore blazed forth from the summit of all that is best in our Sacred Writings. He was a genius of feeling and colour who brought the most uneventful periods of Buddhist lore and the poorly recorded pages of Sikh history to life. After Vivekananda he was the strongest bond between the East and the West He aimed at naturalizing Indian mysticism and spiritualizing western naturalism

It may be said that the glorious history and literature of the Punjab was held by Rabindranath Tagore in the highest esteem. I can also say with sufficient knowledge that the poet took greater pride and interest in the golden-age of Punjabi Literature and history than most of the Punjabis take in it now. Some

practices and Punjabi tunes and Ragas which impressed Tagore were carefully studied by him and adopted at Santiniketan particularly the recital of Brahma-Sangeet. All his life the thought of the Golden Temple lingered in his memory like a heavenly vision. In later years he wrote : "The Golden Temple of Amritsar comes back to me like a dream".

In Tagore's narrative poems on Sikh history we find the poet at his best. With the exception of one poem for which he depended on Cunningham's *Sikh history*, the only book available to the non-Sikhs, the historicity of all the poems is correct. Once a misleading Hindi and Urdu translation of a poem on Guru Gobind Singh caused a great resentment, but when the poet visited Lahore, he was shocked at the awefully bad and incorrect translation of the poem. When he gave the correct rendering the unnecessary resentment was set at rest.

In the whole range of modern Punjabi literature we do not have such inspiring poems on the history of Punjab as Tagore's poems on Band Bahadur, Guru Nanak, Guru Gobind Singh and Bhai Taru Singh and I have been deeply impressed to note that these poems are very popular among the Punjabis.

Tagore was the first to introduce Punjabi literature to the Bengalis nearly three decades ago. He translated the best poems of Guru Nanak into Bengali. His translation of Guru Nanak's Arti is very popular :

Punjabi Original

gagan mai thal ravi cand dipak banae
tarka mandal janak moti
dhup mitian lo pavan cavro karai
sagal banrae phulant jyoti
kaisi arti hoe.

Bengali Translation

Tanhaiey arati kaiey chandra tapana, deva manava bandey charana—
asina sei bisvabarana tanra jagata mandirey
Anadi kala anantagagana sei asima-mahima-magana—
tahey taranga uthey saghana ananda-nanda-nanda rey.

Attracted by these translations some other Bengali scholars translated Guru Nanak's Japji, Guru Arjan's Sukhmani, and Guru Gobind Singh's Jap and other hymns.

The literary and scholastic associations of Punjab with Bengal have been profound and deep though the impact of these contacts has not been properly studied. Our greatest theologian and scholar of the late nineteenth century came to Bengal and studied Sanskrit, Bengali and the Vedic lore at Navadip, the famous University city known for its Sanskrit tolls and steeped in the learning of this land he gave us his philosophic treatise, tikas and the first dictionary of Guru Granth. The English knowing Punjabi writers have known and admired Tagore since long time. Prof Puran Singh who was twenty years younger than Tagore and died ten years earlier than him wrote in the Tagorean style, and introduced the intense lyricism and aesthetic mysticism of Tagore into Punjabi literature. Mr. Earnest Rhys to whom Tagore dedicated one of his books wrote an introduction to two of his books and placed his English poems at par with those of Tagore. Tagore himself paid a great tribute to Puran Singh when he reviewed his books . *Sisters of the spinning wheel* and *Unstrung beads* published in England Puran Singh paid a glowing tribute to Tagore in his *The Spirit of Oriental Poetry* in which he discussed all the Eastern poets from Iqbal to Okakura.

Some short stories and novels of the poet were translated, from the English and Hindi versions, even before the partition.

On the occasion of the centenary, the Punjabi writers are preparing a number of translations under the supervision of the Sahitya Akademi, New Delhi, the Language Department, Patiala and the centenary celebration committee. The Language Department has already translated : *The Religion of Man* and a few other books. I am translating four books from the original Bengali : *Sesh-Lekha*, *Jivan Devta*, *Sahitya*, *Sahityer Pathe* and also collecting material for a comprehensive biography of the poet for which there is a great demand.

I have had the opportunity to discuss with the writers the effect of these translations on them. Each type of literature—drama, fiction, songs, literary criticism—has given a different type of impetus and inspiration to the new writers.

In drama, though the coustruction of the plots is unimpressive, the characters are remarkable and memorable creations. While the male characters of Tagore are like Bengali revolutionaries or saints, the women characters are like sturdy loud-voiced Punjabi women. His creative force and intense lyricism save the lingering mediocrity of the plots. In his criticism of the ascetic cult of Sanyasa he follows the deal of Guru Gobind Singh who says "re man aiso kar sannyasa, ban se sadan sabhai kar samjho, man his mahi udosa". "Man, be such a sannyasin, know all these houses and cities to be forest dwellings and be detached in mind."

The poems and songs that have been translated into Punjabi have impressed the readers with their intense lyricism, their profound depth and resignation. They reveal the trumphs of a seer who grasps the Absolute fearlessly and can find ready images for the deepest spiritual convictions. Many of his songs are reminiscent of the devotional songs of Guru Granth :

> Be not ashamed, my Brothers to stand before the proud and the powerful with your white robe of simpleness.

> Let your crown be of humility, your freedom the freedom of the Soul
> Build God's throne, daily upon the ample bareness of your poverty.
> And know what is huge is not great and pride is not everlasting.

Tagore has impressed us by the belief that evil and tyranny will finally be conquered by the unquenchable compassion of human love. The force of his imagination, the power, pathos and the magnetism of his vision make Tagore the Supreme Singer of all ages. The humanity of his genius has encompassed and made his own all the joys and drama of life. The poet tells us how a writer and an artist should face the inscrutable and the commonplace so that he might not fail in his high conception of an artist's task Art can help a writer to reach the spiritual plane for above petty rote, law and doctrine.

Tagore, the seer, warned the progressing and prosperous countries like Japan, America and Germany against the grave dangers that were to befall their civilization on the stony paths of intrigue, maladjustments and border consciousness. These countries did not take his words seriously and we know what suffering they have had to undergo. What I feel is that our country is trying to move on the same worn out Western wheels of progress and we are paying more attention to dams and buildings than to culture and enlightenment. Our country needs food for body mind and soul and not the superstructure of dying civilizations.

This is what the eternal voice of Rabindranath Tagore would resist sternly and strongly We the writers of all the States should join hands to keep the touch of liberty and light burning here in Santiniketan and all other centres of creative activity till the India of Tagore's dream is in sight.

RABINDRANATH AND PUNJABI LITERATURE

SANT SINGH SEKHAN

WHEN WE set out to assess the influence of a great writer like Rabindranath Tagore on his contemporaries or on those who come after him, we have first to make sure what new elements he himself brought to the literature of his own country and through it to the literature of the world. Without in any way detracting from the greatness of Tagore, we have to take note of the fact that Tagore's genius is remarkable not so much for his contributions to literature as for the stature that he gave it by synthesising and developing those elements that already existed in the tradition. It is acknowledged almost everywhere that the main elements in Tagore's poetry were Vaisnavite bhakti, Upanishadic or Vedantic idealism and Buddhist and Sikh revolutionism and a modern historical consciousness. Such a synthesis Bengali or for that matter any other Indian literature had never known before. And inasmuch as Tagore for the first time in Indian artistic and spiritual tradition effected this synthesis, he is the *pater familias* not only of modern Bengali but of all modern Indian literatures. Of course, our modern Indian literatures have almost all their own *pater familias*, too, but Tagore is in respect of time senior to most of them as Bengal is seniormost among the Indian nationalities in attaining to a modern consciousness.

For Punjabi literature at least this holds good. I would not be very far from truth in saying that modern Punjabi literature has passed through generations, including the present generations of the young. Our first generation started with *Bhai Virsingh*, who was indeed the *pater familias* of our modern literature. And Bhai Virsingh was junior to Rabindranath Tagore by at least a generation , for when he began to write at the begining of the twentieth century, Tagore was pretty well established as the leader of Bengali literature and was

soon to acquire a world stature. But curiously enough, owing to the scantiness of cultural contacts, especially in those days, between different Indian nationalities, hardly anybody knew of Tagore in Punjabi literary circles, until world fame come to him in 1913 when he was awarded the Nobel Prize for Literature Even after that the Punjab came to know Tagore only through English translations of some of his poems and other stories. The writers of the generation of Bhai Virsingh, prominent among whom are Prof Puran Singh, Shri Dhuni, Ram Chatrik and Shri Kripa Sagar, were none of them with the exception of Puran Singh, conversant with English writing, old or modern So hardly any direct influence of Tagore's is to be traced in Punjabi writers of that generation.

But I say this only of direct influence Indirectly, I believe Tagore must have considerably influenced them if in no other way than in convincing them that writing in their own languages was not such a humble task and in firing them with a literary ambition He also indicated that the literary and spiritual tradition of India was no mean a treasure. Dhani Ram Chatrik indeed flourished into a songster who would sing of the mountains and rivers of India and the Punjab, and of our artistic pagan past much as Tagore had sung Kripa Sagar was inspired to sing of the glories of Punjab's history immediately before the British conquest and to make of Ranjit Singh a national hero But there was not to be any great revival of Vaishnavite or Upanishadic love among them. This Bhai Vir- and idealism were to remain the characteristic marks of Bhaivir singh, though to be frank, he seemed to have acquired them not from Tagore, but from the Punjab's own tradition of Sikh and Sufi ways of thought and feeling

Only Puran Singh among this first generation of Punjabi writers had considerable awareness of Tagore's achievement, and I think that in his own way he aspired to rival him on the

Indian and the world scene. For he wrote considerably in English a kind of poetic prose which though it had its main inspiration from Walt Whitman was influenced by Tagore's poetry in its English translations, notably *Gitanjali* and *Fruit Gathering*.

The growth of the second generation of Punjabi writing was delayed Between 1914 and 1930 there is a kind of interregnum in Punjabi literature. Though, of course, writers of the earlier generation continued their work, upto the end of the Great War in 1918, there could not be much literary activity in the Punjab which was more thoroughly immersed in what we may call the war effort of the time than any other province of India. Consequently, after the end of the war when Britain did not seem to be yielding anything in the way of self-government, the disappointment and anger of the Punjab were great. From 1919 to about the end of the Simon commission the Punjab knew of no other literature except that of the political platform, the Swarajya movement of the Congress being reinforced there by the Khilafat movement of the Punjabi muslims and the Akali movement of the Sikhs.

It is for this reason that the second generation of Punjabi writers, Giani Hira Singh Daud, Gurumuk Singh Musafir, Bhai Nanak Singh, and Gurbakhsh Singh, started writing with a literary purpose only after 1930 All of them except Gurbakhsh Singh had been during the twenties writing and singing for the Akali or the nationalist movements.

But in the thirties the third generation had also come upon the scene and it took its inspiration less from the native Indian tradition than from the leftist and high brow intellectual movements of the West. The second generation mentioned above, was either obliged to follow the third as in the case of Hira Singh Daud or to continue their work in a rather submerged flow parallel to the work of the third generation,

seeking their inspiration from the Native Indian tradition Nanak Singh turned from writing religious songs for the Akali movement to writing novels, modelling his work on Sarat Chandra Chatterjee, and through him of course on Rabindranath Tagore. By that time Tagore's short stories especially and his novels to a lesser extent, had begun to exercise great influence on all Indian literatures, mainly through their English translations. The purpose and aim of Nanak Singh's novels is the same as that of the novels of Sarat Chandra or of Tagore, the exposure of the inhuman cruelty of the prejudices and taboos of the life of our middle class.

In the purpose and content of his writing fiction as well as general prose, Gurbakhsh Singh was perhaps inspired more by American sources, Walt Whitman, up to Sinclair and Samuel Smile, to be more particular, than by Tagore; but Tagore's influence is decidedly there in the style of his writing. Curiously, the stylistic influence of Tagore had come to be exerted by that time on Punjabi as well as on Urdu and Hindu through the English translations of his writings; so that our prose was coming to be written like poetry and our poetry like prose. Gurbakhsh Singh's poetic prose was thus shaped under Tagorean influences. Also Gurbakhsh Singh's feeling and thought, combining a modern consciousness with a native Indian didacticism and spirituality, are more akin to Tagore's than to those of any writers of the West. For while Gurbakhsh Singh never fought shy of expressing the feelings of the senses, transforming them in the way of Tagore which was the way of the Sikh Gurus also into something pure and beautiful, he was like Tagore again modern enough not to fall to a revivalist temptation; but boldly urged his readers to take life and live it with all the consciousness of the modern man Interestingly enough, Gurbakhsh Singh's modern consciousness led him ultimately to prefer the Russian way of life to the American

way of life, which originally dominated his imagination and today many will count him among the writers of the left.

The third generation under the original impact of the Western Marxist and Freudian ideas was less subject to the influence of Tagore. There is no denying that Tagore's impact on the Indian spirit has been too strong to have left it unaffected in its literary, cultural and artistic manifestations. Indeed, most of the writers of the third generation can be said to have imbibed literary culture in their College and School more through the writings of Tagore's works in their English translations than through the works of English writers. Tagore was something so akin that they were almost involuntarily led to imitate him, whether they wrote poetry or prose. The poems of poets like Mohan Singh, while undoubtedly they arose from the Punjabi tradition and imbibed Western Marxist and Freudian influences, are a mixture of Vaishnava sensuousness, devotion and feeling on the one hand, and subtle, counterpointed and tonal literature and music like Tagore's.

The third generation of Punjabi writing excelled in the short story perhaps even more than in lyrical poetry. Here also the pioneers like the writers of their paper, Kartar Singh, Duggal and Sujan Singh, while they strove consciously to model their writing on the Western short story writers like Katherine Mansfield, for instance, were by the nature of their feeling obliged to fall into the path beaten by Tagore. In particular, such stories as the Kabuliwallah, the Home coming, the Babus of Nayanjore and the Cast away have had a tremendous influence on Punjabi short-story writing

Broadly speaking Tagore's plays can be divided into two sections, the musical dance-plays, the art of which Punjabi has not yet been able to assimilate, and the socio-historical plays, like Mukta-Dhara, Natir-Puja, and Chandalika, which are

certainly the pro-types of a fairly large amount of drama written in Punjabi.

It is not intended to discuss Tagore's influence on the younger generation, the fourth in this scheme of succession. All that can be mentioned is that this influence in view of the materialistic temper of the generation cannot be direct.

RABINDRANATH AND MARATHI LITERATURE

B. V. (MAMA) WARERKAR

IN WHAT manner does literature in one language influence literature in others? What is the nature of such influence? Such questions would naturally arise in the minds of men who may proceed to survey the influence of Tagore on the literature in their own languages which do not happen to be Bengali. Though the pattern of such influence may be similar to some extent even in Bengali, there would be differences according to the traditions of each language and literature, and according to the degrees of the receptivity conditioned by the cultural level of the language group.

Could we possibly assess the influence of Tagore on literatures in other languages in the same way as we would do while measuring the influence, for instance, of English literature and the great English writers? Obviously there would be some difficulties in a similar process. English is the language of an altogether different and distinct cultural group, its influence on an Indian language and literature can be directly traced, as they are often noticeable in sharp contrast to Indian cultural and literary traditions. Such would not, however, be the case when one tries to assess the influence of a Bengali writer. There is a common ancient heritage, cultural values and literary traditions which have been inherited by all the languages and literatures of India. These are the foundations on which the unity in diversity of Indian culture as a whole stands. That was the common soil in which Tagore too had his roots. One would therefore have to exclude it while assessing the influence of Tagore, as it may well be, that the newer trends which the particular literature developed, though contemporary and similar to Tagore, may have as well sprung from the common cultural heritage which that language already had.

One must also examine the nature of literary influence. The fact that several or, may be, almost all the works of an author have been translated into other languages would not necessarily be a sure indicator of the influence he may have had on those languages ; for translation is only facility of communication. The real pointer to influences would be the effect of the content of the communication.

Imitation may to some extent show the influences Imitation, though it may be the finest compliment to greatness seldom helps the imitator to establish his own position in his language and literature. Moreover such imitators are usually minor literary figures in that language. The real test, one may venture to say, would be how far the artistic form, the techniques of expression and the emotional and thought content as revealed in the works of the great literary personality, have inspired creative writers in other languages. Such influence will not be visible directly, but as a sympathetic vibration or reverberation, which retains individuality and originality and yet owes its stimulus to a great literary personality in another language With these considerations, we may now proceed to survey the influence of Tagore on the different branches of Marathi Literature.

Poetry

The new age in modern Marathi poetry had already been ushered in by KESHAVSUTA (1866-1905) when he began writing different types of poems in 1885 Not only did his love lyrics and patriotic and social poems break away from the classical tradition, but he also introduced a new stream of mystic poetry which may be classed as neo-mysticism Later on, this type of poetry was called 'goodhagunjan' a term with implications similar to 'Chhayawad' in Hindi. This mystic

poetry of Keshavsuta thrilled the understanding of a few and influenced the later poets, but was beyond the comprehension of the average many. When in 1913 Tagore received the Nobel prize for his Gitanjali, it was in a way a glorification of mystic poetry, and gave a fillip to the neo-mystic trend started by Keshavsuta. 'Manoranjan', a widely read Marathi journal of those days brought out a profusely illustrated feature on Tagore, soon after he received the Nobel prize, and thus introduced him to a large section of Marathi readers. Gitanjali was first translated in prose by the great Marathi novelist Hari Narayan Apte. This was followed by another translation, also in prose, by the poet G. W. Kanetkar. Then in 1920, appeared Rigvedi's translation in the famous Abhang style of Tukaram. The special feature of this translation was that it gave relevant abhangas of Tukaram for further elucidation. Poet Madhavanuj translated some poems of Tagore, and poet D. L. Mahajan translated the whole of the Gitanjali in verse in 1931. Besides this, many other writers had translated some lyrics of Tagore in prose and in verse.

The real acquaintance with Tagore's poetry and the influence on Marathi writers cannot, however, be ascribed to these translations, or to original Bengali, but to his English renderings. In the period 1920-30, Tagore was widely read and discussed in literary circles—old and new. Some poets like G. W. Kanetkar and Viragi closely imitated Tagore in their mystic poems, but these did not create any significant impression on Marathi poetry.

The major poet who showed a noticeable influence of Tagore in his poems was Tambe (1874-1941). He had already a strain of mysticism in some of his poems, sometimes of the traditional type, sometimes of the new style of Keshavsuta. Several of his later lyrics, which are genuine and high Marathi poetry, show similarities in ideas with Tagore's poems. So much so, that in

his edition of Tambe's poems, poet Madhav Julion traced out likenesses to poems in Gitanjali and Gardener in good many lyrics of Tambe.

Another major poet in whose poems Tagore's influence could possibly be traced was BEE (1872-1947) He was, however, more in line with the mystic poetry of Keshavsuta and Govindagraj but had also his own simple yet extremely attractive style, which in some lyrics of his reminds one of Tagore

Marathi poets of Vidarbha from 1925 onwards began enriching the neo-mystic poetry of bringing into it strains of love and beauty mysticism In the poems of Anil 1901-) Gunwant Hanumant Deshpande (1897-) Waman Narayan Deshpande (1903-) and of other poets of Vidarbha one finds a quintessence of traditional devotional mysticism, the mysticism of Keshavsuta and the Tagore touch mingled with their own independent creativity. Mystic poetry, so to say, then became associated with Vidarbha, and created a living new trend which holds a high place in Marathi inspite of the ultra-modern experimental poetry which came up in the last 15 years

Poets N G Joshi and S. J. Purwar show some influence of Tagore's philosophy in their longer poems, and there are traces here and there, of Tagore's influence on other poets also

PROSE

As already said, Marathi writers' acquaintance with Tagore was more through his English renderings. The charming style of his English prose enraptured many writers and they began writing in the same strain, thus creating a style of poetic prose known as 'Gadya Kavya' in Marathi Balwant Ganesh Khaparde, a well-known poet of Vidarbha wrote much in this style and the credit of making this form popular goes to him.

His 'songs in prose' have recognisable similarities both in expression and content with Tagore Many young writers adopted this form, notable among them being C. B. Lele, Shankar Sathe, P. D. Kandalgaonkar, Shashank and S. G. Purwar. This poetic prose in the style of Tagore has come to stay in Marathi, as evidenced by recent writings of Krantadarshi Budhe and of Kusumagraj, which have received much appreciation.

The essay in Marathi had already been developed by such masters of prose as Vishnushastri Chiplunkar, Agarkar, Lokamanya Tilak and S. M. Paranjape before the advent of Tagore. It had been effectively used for social, political, philosophical and literary writings. The essay and other forms of prose, therefore could not be amenable to Tagore's influence. Moreover, the English renderings of Tagore's prose, did not also have the potentiality of exerting a literary influence in the absence of direct contact with his Bengali prose The later development of personal essay in Marathi was influenced more by English parallels. The influence of Tagore's thought is however seen in the writings of Acharya J. S. Bhagwat, Kaka Saheb Kalelkar and others

Drama

Marathi stage has a living tradition of more than hundred years and has shown great capacity and originality in absorbing the Indian and the Western dramatic forms. The popularity of drama has been unrivalled in Maharashtra, in fact the stage held the sway in Marathi literature for a long period. When Tagore's dramas like 'Post Office' and 'The King of the Dark Chamber' became known to Marathi writers through English translations, Marathi stage was in the powerful grip of playwrights like Kolhatkar, Dewal Khadilkar, Warerkar and Gadkari,

whose eminence remains unabated till today. Their plays have been and even today are great stage successes In the thirties the Shakespearean yielded place to the Ibsenian, but Tagore's play seldom went on the stage though 'Muktadhara' had been translated by S G Bhave in 1924 Many plays of Tagore have been translated These failed to have any influence on Marathi stage as such as they seemed to have slender chance of stage success. Some plays of Tagore are recently being staged by amateur groups and with the new stage techniques may prove attractive The fact, however, remains that Tagore's dramas impress the Marathi mind more by their poetic and lyrical qualities than by dramatic effect and stage-craft. The influence has, therefore, to be traced in lyrical drama, which has a place in literature but little on the professional stage W. N. Deshpande, N. G. Hood, W. R Kant and others wrote lyrical dramas, and of late P. S Rege and Mangesh Padgaonkar have revived the form. But to trace any influence of Tagore in these would be rather far-fetched.

Novel and Short Story

Though Marathi novel had reached its hall mark under Hari Narayan Apte, translations and adaptations of Bengali novels had already gained popularity in Marathi Some of the Bengali novelists already known were Bankimchandra, Prabhat Kumar Mukherji and later on Saratchandra Tagore's 'Home and the World' and 'Gora' were translated in Marathi in the twenties, but the development of Marathi novel followed an independent course. The influence of Tagore, if it could be found at all, is very indirect and mixed up with several other western influences In some novels which have a poetical quality, for instance, in 'Suklele Phool' by P Y Deshpande one finds elements similar to Tagore's These may also be noticeable in novels by other authors, and to some extent in technique and treatment

In the field of short story, however, the influence of Tagore is more perceptible. Translations of his stories had appeared in the popular monthly '*Manoranjan*', and helped to some extent the shift from narration of incidents to delineation of character. Diwakar Krishna, the pioneer of this new emergence, was to some extent influenced by Tagore in his delicate and artistic style. Later on writers like Kamlabai Tilak, Vibhavari Shirurkar, Kusumavati Deshpande, Waman Chorghade and others developed the short story to bring it to the level of poetry. The influence of Tagore was more in technique and craft than in content and character. May be, the pervading poetical element in Marathi short story is faintly traceable to Tagore. Now Marathi short story has developed phenomenally in many directions and dimensions under a plethora of writers and it is futile to trace any particular influence.

In summing up one can say that Tagore's influence on Marathi literature as a whole has been like the water of the Ganges mingling with that of the Jamuna. It retained its distinguishability for some time but has now so mingled with the main stream as to be unrecognizable.

RABINDRANATH AND MARATHI LITERATURE

G. D. KHANOLKAR

RABINDRANATH'S writings were unknown to the people of Maharastra till 1913 This year was of great importance. It brought great international fame to Rabindranath and prestige to India On the evening of 13th November of that year news flashed throughout India that Rabindranath had been awarded the Nobel Prize of £8000 by the Swedish Academy for his Gitanjali — a collection of prose poems in English. This news naturally brought him into unprecedented prominence.

I might remind you that Maharastra takes great pride in the fact that Rabindranath spent impressionable years of his life in Maharastra and what is more he actually wrote some of his literary works during his stay in Maharastra They are two dramas "प्रकृतिर प्रतिशोध" and "राजा ओ राणी' He also wrote such poems as 'जयतु शिवाजी', 'प्रतिनिधि', 'विचारक' eulogising the great and noble deeds of Maratha heroes. He also wrote a drama called "सती" based on a story narrated in a Marathi folk-song. And yet, surprisingly enough the Maharastrians had not even a nodding acquaintance of his works

His elder brother Satyendranath who was a member of the Indian Civil Service, worked as District and Sessions Judge at several District Head quarters of Maharastra. It is on record that during his stay in Maharastra, he developed very friendly relations with some of the literary figures, social and religious reformers of those days In the year 1894-96 Satyendranath was in Satara as District and Sessions Judge. While at Satara, he came in contact with N C Kelkar who then had just started practising as pleader This N C Kelkar is no other than the renowed and famed Editor of Kesari and Maratha and a trusted lieutenant of Lokamanya Bal Gangadhar Tilak who for high and best contributions to Marathi Literature has earned the title of 'साहित्यसम्राट्'. In one of his casual talks with Satyendranath, he

expressed his desire to learn Bengali language, and Satyendranath asked his wife Jnanadanandini Devi to give him lessons in it. About the same time another brother of Rabindranath, Jyotirindranath was on a visit to his brother at Satara. He is a well-known playwright and musician. He has 33 plays to his credit. Some of them are original, some are translations. N. C. Kelkar got acquainted with Jyotirindranath as well as with his plays. Kelkar brought out one of Jyotirindranath's plays 'सरोजिनी' into Marathi with his help. It was published in 1897 in a book form. This work was the first work from the pen of a member of the Thakur family to be translated into Marathi. Incidentally this was also the first literary effort of N. C. Kelkar who eventually rose to become its premier litterateur. Although Kelkar came in contact with Jyotirindranath and his works, it is surprising that he had absolutely no knowledge about his younger brother Rabindranath or his literary activities.

It is interesting to note that after the publication of 'सरोजिनी', two novels i. e. 'दीपनिर्वाण' and 'फुलेर माला' ('बकुलमाला' 1912), by Rabindranath's elder sister Swarnakumari Devi appeared in Marathi. It is really strange that so far nobody knew anything about the writings of such merit as those of Rabindranath, even when the works of the members of his family were being translated into Marathi. As I have already stated, the year 1913 was very propitious. On the 13th of November of that year a Calcutta evening paper 'Empire' in announcing the exciting news of the award of Nobel Prize to Rabindranath for his work, wrote : "It is the first recognition of the indigenous literature of the Empire as a wold force, it is the first time that an Asiatic has attainted distinction at the hands of Swedish Academy and this is the first occasion upon which the £8000 prize has been awarded to a poet who writes in a language so entirely foreign to the awarding country — to Sweden." The news flashed like lightning all over the country. People all over the country

were thrilled 'Who is this Rabindranath?' They exclaimed, 'we have never heard of him, nor seen his works before?' Maharastra was simply amazed at this news. Maharashtra knew some Bengali writers of repute such as Bankim Chandra, Romesh Chandra Dutt, Chandicharan Sen, Devi Prosad Roy-Chowdhuri, Haran Chandra Rakshit, Satya Charan Shastri, Satish Chandra Chakravarti, Jalandhar Sen and others Marathi readers had already read with relish the novels of these Bengali writers in Marathi translations. They had already enjoyed the beauty of the poems of Toru Dutt, Madhusudan Dutt and Girindra Mohini Devi. Marathi readers appreciated the plays (translated in Marathi) like 'नीलदर्पण', of Deenabandhu Mitra, 'तरुबाला', 'बिजय-वसन्त' and 'विवाह-विभ्राट' of Amritlal Basu, 'पद्मावती' and 'कृष्णाकुमारी' of Madhusudan Dutt and yet they knew nothing of Rabindranath Not even a single book or poem was known to them

Rabindranath wrote two of his plays 'प्रकृतीर प्रतिशोध and 'राजा ओ राणी' in his sojourn in Maharastra The first in Karwar (1884) and the second in Sholapur (1893) and yet Maharashtra (or any reader) knew nothing of them

The last days of 1913 created, among the people of all Indian languages, a very great longing to know the works of Rabindranath. Maharashtra was no exception Although Maharashtra in general was not acquainted with the works of Rabindranath, two of the greatest leaders of Maharashtra, namely Lokamanya Tilak and the Hon Gopal Krishna Gokhale were well-acquainted with it

Although Tilak came in personal contact with Rabindranath as late as 1917, they knew each other since 1893. Rabindranath evinced keen interest in the problems of cow-slaughter then claiming attention all over India on account of the intense agitation set afoot by Lokamanya Tilak in Poona In 1898 Rabindranath wrote strongly and indignantly against the

reactionary policy of the Indian Government, particularly regarding the treatment meted out to Lokamanya Tilak, who was arrested on a charge of publishing seditious articles in Kesari (alleged to have led to the murder of Mr Rand, the Bombay Plague Officer and his friend Lt. Ayerst in June 1898). He had actively helped in raising funds for the defence of Lokamanya Tilak.

Rabindranath and Tilak knew each other intimately in later years through Sakharam Ganesh Deuskar, the veteran Maratha Bengali journalist and author, and Sarala Devi Ghoshal (later Chaudhurani), his niece. They sought advice on political problems of the day. Deuskar and Sarala Devi started celebrations such as 'वीराष्टमी', 'प्रतापादित्य उत्सव', 'उदयादित्य उत्सव' on the lines of 'गणेशोत्सव' and 'शिवाजी उत्सव' in Maharashtra. In 1904 even 'शिवाजी उत्सव' was started by these two persons in Calcutta. Deuskar and Sarala Devi were no doubt the chief organisers of these celebrations, but the guiding force behind this movement was that of Rabindranath and Lokamanya Tilak.

In the same year (1904) Deuskar published this 'शिवाजीर दीक्षा' in Bengali. Rabindranath wrote his poem 'जयतु शिवाजी' for this book. Deuskar translated it into Marathi and sent it to Lokamanya Tilak. He appreciated the spirit of the poem so much so that he wrote a letter to Rabindranath saying that "The name of Shiwaji, the great, shall certainly bind Maharashtra and Bengal together without a war ('बंग माराठारे एक करि दिबे बिना रणे'). Tilak's six years' incarceration in 1908 however prevented what might have been an intimate and fruitful association between the two.

Rabindranath's acquaintance with Maharashtrians was not confined only to Tilak but it is a matter of history that the Hon. G. K. Gokhale, another outstanding figure of those days, also knew him and what is more his writings as well. Gokhale's political Guru, the late Mr. M. G. Ranade, was held in high esteem and this fact brought them closer. Nagendranath

Gupta, an intimate friend of Rabindranath, and the late editor of Tribune, Lahore writes in his memoirs, 'Reflections and Reminiscences', "I remember several years before Rabindranath received the Nobel Prize, Gokhale the politician and mathematician learned the Bengali language for the express purpose of reading his poems in the original Bengali Gokhale on one occasion read out to me a few poems apologizing for his inability to reproduce the Bengali accent and enunciation, and then asked me to read the same poems in the manner of a Bengali"

Although Rabindranath and his literature were known to Tilak, Gokhale and a few persons within their circle, by and large, Rabindranath remained a stranger to Maharashtrians until 1913, when the Nobel Prize for literature came to be awarded to him It might sound ironical but never-the-less it is true that it was the recognition of the merits of Rabindranath's work implicit in the award of this prize that was responsible for their inferring that Rabindranath's work must be of sterling worth. After that award a number of appreciative articles on Rabindranath and his literature appeared in English periodicals and quite a few of them appeared in Marathi translations. It then dawned on Marathi readers that here was a poet whom they can no longer afford not to know V D Savarkar whose valient deeds are a by-word in the country, was then serving his term of imprisonment, dreaming of and chalking out plans for his country's freedom He was so thrilled with the news that he could not contain his joy and wrote a poem in praise of Rabindranath's achievement Savarkar himself had at one time cherished an ambition of becoming the poet laureate of India, but God having willed otherwise, he was wearing out his life in jail for his country He concluded his poem . "The Veena of Kalidas disappeared after him. But it has come back to Rabindranath and is now thrilling the whole world with its heavenly music I am proud of you, oh

poet, and offer my salutations to you". Savarkar sent this poem to Rabindranath from the Andamans. All of you who know Savarkar as a great revolutionary and as an author of the great book 'Indian War of Independence', may not be aware of the place that he occupies in the world of letters in Maharashtra. He is a playwright of no mean order and as a poet, his place in Marathi literature can be described by saying that he is to us what Nazrul Islam is to Bengalis.

Many enquiries were now being made about the life and works of Rabindranath A monthly called 'नवयुग' had just been started on the lines of Strand and Pearson. This monthly began to publish 'Gitanjali' as a serial. The translation was by Rao Sahib Govind Wasudeo Kanitkar, a well-known poet of those days. In the same year (1914) Shri Walchand Kothari published a free translation of 'चोखेर वालि' a novel by Rabindranath In Marathi it was published under the title of 'पति-पत्नि प्रेम'. This was the first novel of Rabindranath to be translated into Marathi. N. C. Kelkar wrote an extensive introduction to it. After the appearance of this first novel many others were translated into Marathi during the last 47 years. They are 'बौठाकुराणीर हाट', 'नौकाडुबी', 'गोरा', 'राजर्षि', 'घरे वाहिरे', 'मुकुट', 'योगायोग', 'चतुरंग' 'नष्टनीड', and 'मालंच'. In advanced age he wrote three novels, which were entirely modernist and incomparable in this respect. They are 'दुई बोन', 'शेषेर कविता', 'चार अध्याय'. These three were really written by him as a model as it were to the modernists. They have still not come before our young writers. Let us hope that in the near future some young writer, eager for a change and something new will undertake this work. They will then then know where lies real newness for which they have been clamouring.

Readers in Maharashtra liked the novels of Rabindranath no doubt, but still they are not so popular as those of Saratchandra Chatterji. If I were asked why it is so, I woud venture to

say without meaning any disrespect to those who have translated his novels, that Rabindranath, the novelist, has not so far got good translators in Marathi except in the case of three of his novels, which are · 'घरे वाहिरे', 'चतुरंग', and 'मालंच'. All other translations are mediocre and if therefore the novels of Rabindranath are not popular as they should have been, the fault does not lie either with the reading public, nor with the novels themselves, which I dare say would hold their own against the best in the world literature, but with the translations It has been my confirmed opinion after reading the originals in Bengali and their translation in Marathi that real Rabindranath had not yet been introduced in Marathi and that he can only be introduced by those translators who, besides being steeped in Rabindranath's literature have also a style akin to his in its work-music, picturesqueness and restrain.

Compared to his other literary output Rabindranath's stories are however much more popular with the Marathi reading public and that has been so because in the case of short stories the translators were equal to the task Such renowned writers like V. G Apte, S G. Bhave, Mama Warerkar and V. S Vakil did the work and the results have been extremely satisfactory. Shri S. G. Bhave was the pioneer in this respect He translated 'शेपेर रात्रि' ('मानशी') in चित्रमयजगत् in 1918. Till now six or seven collections of Rabindranath's short stories—big or small have been published These have certainly set a new pattern before our Marathi writers. In Marathi, short story as a form of literature has made great progress of late, and a good deal of credit for this can justifiably be given to Rabindranath's influence as a story-teller To Marathi short story writers the Rabindranath of short stories appeared totally different from the Rabindranath of Gitanjali

Although I am of the view that of the various forms of literature Rabindranath touched nothing which he did not

adorn, there are people who have their preferences. Even so, the informed opinion is that in the sphere of short story-writing Rabindranath has few equals and no superiors. Recently the Sahitya-Akademi has published 21 of his stories in the regional languages. I would only hope that the Akademi would not rest content with this publication but would publish in course of time all his short stories in all the regional languages of our country. In doing so, they would help the emotional integration of the country. Although the fame of Rabindranath as litterateur rests primarily on Gitanjali, it might perhaps surprise you, if I were to tell you that Gitanjali could not capture the imagination of Maharashtrians. At present there are as many as six translations of Gitanjali—there in prose and three in verse. Hari Narayan Apte, the father of Marathi novels, has done a prose translation. He has added in the beginning an introduction showing great insight into the beauty and significance of the song offerings, Hari Narayan Apte is the Bankim of Marathi literature. In addition in these six productions Shri Kaka Kalelkar has brought out a book containing a few selected songs under the title of 'रवीन्द्रमनन'. This book is of vital importance in understanding Rabindranath's spiritual insight in the poems. He has tried to convey to his readers the mystery like of which he came to realise as he was reading with joy the poems of Gitanjali and often he has succeeded. No such attempt was made before by any one to explain the spiritual significance of the book. But even this attempt appears incomplete. These beautiful songs are full of musical charm and subtlety of rhythm and their beauty and spiritual content can, therefore, never be grasped in their entirety in prose form. Many of them are such that unless they are recited with their proper musical notes, they cannot make adequate impression on the minds of the litterateurs.

These songs must be sung in such a way that the ears of the

listeners will be able to enjoy the entrancing beauty of the auditory images that would come tumultuously like waves and gladden the heart. It is only thus that the listener will be able to enjoy the expression of the content of the songs. In fact we must hear the special musical notes which make up the songs, if we desire to enjoy their beauty of thought and ineffable spiritual grandeur.

It was with this object that Pandit Bhimrao Shastri Hasurka from Maharashtra who was for many years teacher at Santiniketan published his 'संगीत गीतांजलि' containing musical notes of every song in Devnagari script. He has given the 'राग' ताल, and लय, of every song. In the introduction to the book he has explained the principles underlying the notation of every song The project of preparing such a book had Rabindranath's full support. It was published under his guidance in 1927. Very few literary men or readers in Maharashtra have even the slightest inkling of this fact that a Maharashtrian music expert has done such an important piece of work. It is also doubtful how far people of other states are aware of the existence of this work. This book is not available now. I may suggest that Visva-Bharati or Sahitya Akademi should publish a new edition of this book, as it would be very useful to all those who desire to study the songs of Rabindranath. The book 'स्वरवितान' by Indira Devi also should be brought out in Devnagari script. Along with these Shri Shantidev Ghosh's 'रवीन्द्र सगीत' and the book in Bengali 'सुर ओ सगति' which is the outcome of the discussion between Shri Dhurjati Prasad Mukhopadhyay and Rabindranath should be translated into all regional languages and published

Rabindranath has invented several new metres and used them in his poems. Some one who is an authority on Bengali metrical science should write explaining these metres and his work should be translated and published in all Indian languages.

With such a book it will be easy for non-Bengalis to appreciate properly the beauty of Rabindranath's poetry.

After Gitanjali was published in Marathi in the poetic form many poets were influenced by the style and subject of the poems and as a result there was a large wave of prose poetry in Marathi full of mysticism. This subsided however, after 1935. Marathi poetry took a new turn. Today T. S. Eliot, Ezra Pound, D. H. Lawrence, Ogden and other Western poets are their ideal. Marathi poets are also trying to follow in the footsteps of such Bengali poets as Vishnu De, Buddhadev Basu, Premendra Mitra, Sudhindra Dutt. But they are totally unware of the fact that Rabindranath is more modern than the most modern of the poets. The reason for this is that Rabindranath's poetic works like 'पूरबी', 'पुनश्च', 'पत्रपुट' and 'शामली' have not come to their knowledge. 'शिशुतीर्थ', and 'शेषेर कविता', the latter of which, though in prose form, is really what I would call a चंपुकाव्य, are modern but at the same time classical poems, but unknown to Marathi literati. If ever they come across even the English translation of 'शामली' or 'Wings of Death', 'The Herald of Spring', 'Farewell, my friend', they may have some idea of the modernity of Rabindranath.

Many prose poems on the model of Gitanjali were composed in Marathi and published. They were full of feeling and yet there was not even the shadow of a suggestion in them of the manifestation of beauty and experience of unalloyed joy, which one finds in Gitanjali. But about the same time there was the late Bhaskerrao Tambe who had the same merits of being a worshipper of beauty and lover of music and whose poems did manifest to a great extent beauty as well as experience of unalloyed joy. 'Anil' (Atmaram Ravji Deshpande) of the next generation and Shri B. B. Borkar and Mangesh Padgaonkar of the present generation are in the same tradition. Rabindranath's poetry has influenced considerably the poetry of Tambe, Anil and Borkar.

Rabindranath has alone composed more than 2500 songs No poet in the world has composed such a vast number of songs. Bengalis are very proud of this and they call him the king of songs. Thus they say

"जगत् कविसभाय मोरा तोमार करि गर्व ;
बांगालि आजि गानेर राजा, बांगालि नहे खर्व ।"

They are no doubt rightly proud of this achievement but Bengal should not remain content with merely calling him 'गानेर राजा' (king of songs). They should arrange to convince the people of the world of this, by making them hear and sing his music Instead of publishing his poems in Bengali script only, our brothers from Bengal who have drunk deep of his poetry and music, should arrange to get them published along with the musical notation in the Devnagari script which is familiar to the whole of India. Rabindra Sabhas should be established in every State where people will be able to hear and study his music and his writings. I do not know how far people of other States are acquainted with the music and original literature of Rabindranath. In Maharashtra, excepting people of three big cities i e. Bombay, Poona and Nagpur, people are ignorant not only of his songs but of any of his hundreds of lyrics. Even poets of our literature know nothing of them. Their knowledge is limited to only the English renderings of his works "In the case of Rabindranath, the English translation does not always carry the full information of the original Most of his poetry is song but English is at best a sort of rhythmic prose. Not only are the effects of metre and rhyme and the delicate rhythmic devices lost in translation, but the poet's work is represented in terms of an altogether different art" Thus a correct and complete idea of Rabindranath's poetry has not become available to our Marathi brothers and so its richness and true flavour have been denied to them

Some of his poems like 'शिशु' are not primarily musical and

hence some have been successful in bringing them out in Marathi. Poet 'माधव' (N. K. Katdare) has successfully rendered in prose as well as in verse some of the poems from 'शिशु'. These translations showed the Marathi reader a new facet of the poetic genius of Rabindranath. They were as popular as the stories of Rabindranath.

Acharya Bhagwat has translated the dramatic poems 'गांधारीर आवेदन', 'कर्ण-कुंती संवाद', 'विदाय अभिशाप'. Acharya Bhagwat is very successful in these translations which possess matchless beauty. Acharya Bhagwat is prominent amongst the few in Maharashtra who make a careful, critical study of Rabindranath's works. He finds great delight in this work. He also tries to draw the attention of young men of Maharashtra to Rabindranath's works and gives them guidance. The late Sane Guruji (Pandurang Sadashiv Sane) was another writer of note, who wrote plenty of light literature. His life as well as his literature were influenced by the personality and thought of Mahatma Gandhi and also of Rabindranath. He has translated two books of Rabindranath. They are 'स्वदेशी समाज' and 'साधना'. Both these are written in a very simple style and yet they are very beautiful. Sane Guruji's life and works were effective in purifying and guiding the life and writings of the young men of his time. The translation in Marathi by S. S. Gokhale of Rabindranath's 'जीवनस्मृति' in 1920, his short biography by R. G. Kanade in 1926 and my own extensive biography published on his 100th birthday gave Maharashtra a comprehensive picture of his life and works

For the last fifteen years two periodicals in Marathi' 'साधना' a weekly and 'नवभारत' a monthly have occasionally been publishing critical, scholarly articles on the life and writings of Rabindranath. These articles have been attracting young Marathi readers who have been drawn to the study of Bengali, so that they can have a true insight into Rabindranath's works.

Two well-known poets of this generation, Shri B B Borkar and Mangesh Padgaonkar, have been translating his beautiful lyrics into Marathi in musical form

It seems the new metre कणिका was the creation of Rabindranath following Japanese टांका poetry Shri Gopinath Talvalkar was the pioneer who introduced it into Marathi The कणिका s composed by him are very popular Madhav Julian, one of our foremost poets wrote poems in कणिका metre and he was so charmed with it that he included it in his well-known book 'छंदोरचना' (Treatise on metre) and included it in the category 'लीलारति'.

Rabindranath's plays were not found so attractive as his novels short stories and songs by the Marathi readers and writers But of his 36 plays only four, i e 'मुक्तधारा', 'चित्रांगदा', 'डाकघर', and 'विसर्जन' have been translated into Marathi. This shows that Marathi litterateurs, especially the playwrights, have not paid any attention to this class of writings

The All India Bengali Literary Conference was held in Bombay last January Under its patronage 'Bahu Rupee' of Calcutta staged a play 'रक्तकरवि' (Red Oleaders). The stage arrangement and acting of Shambhû Mitra and Tripti Mitra gave a real surprise to the Marathi Stage Directors The young play wrights and Stage Directors of Maharashtra were amazed by what they saw and they are now thinking of the new technique of Stage Direction and acting Their indifferent attitude towards Rabindranath's plays and their technique is slowly improving Some of our young actors and Stage Directors are now trying to follow in the footsteps of Shambhu Mitra Let us hope they succeed in this attempt and we may soon be able to see more of Rabindranath's plays successfully staged before us.

Only 36 out of more than 300 books of Rabindranath have come out in Marathi garb They belong to three or four cate-

gories of literature. The field of his literary work is very vast and he had handled every type of literature. His achievements in the field of dance, drama and painting are peerless. His writings are full of variety, colour and originality. It is only when we have a first-hand knowledge of all this that is his creation that we shall have a complete idea of this great literary seer, of his idealism and greatness of his ceaseless effort throughout his life for giving us a true vision of life. But how are people to know all that he created in the literary field? Who will give them this knowledge?

This year his birth centenary is being celebrated with all pomp throughout India and outside. Meetings, symposia, gatherings, exhibitions, are held everywhere on a large scale. There are dances, drama and music programmes everywhere. The States of India are vying with each other in making the biggest memorial for Rabindranath. They all intended having a Theatre erected everywhere. The State Govt. of Maharashtra are planning to have a theatre erected in Bombay at a cost of Rupees fifteen lakh or thereabout The theatre will ultimately turn into a 'कलाकेन्द्र' which will represent an attempt to preserve, to enrich and to ensure the continuity of the great heritage and traditions of Maharashtra in Arts and Literature. The theatre will ultimately turn into an art centre where dance, drama, music and pictorial art will have a prominent place But will Rabindrath's works find a real place in it? Some of us had fondly thought that the place will be a study centre for Rabindranath's works on the model of 'Rabindra-Sadan' established at Santiniketan. It should have a Rabindra museum where all his works in original Bengali with their translations in different languages of India also critical and biographical literature on him would be made available for those who would like to study. The centre should be provided with all records of Rabindranath's songs. Proper arrangement

should also be made for studying technique of his plays. An academy should also be established where all possible provision would be made for the study of रवीन्द्र साहित्य and रवीन्द्रसंगीत But are all these hopes only a day-dream ?

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RABINDRANATH AND GUJARATI LITERATURE

UMASHANKAR JOSHI

How does a great writer influence his contemporaries? Perhaps he influences most by his artistic integrity, by his artistic stature. Rabindranath's work was to his countrymen a revelation of the truth that no matter in which language one wrote one was called upon to write world literature, i. e. what would be literature by universal standards. Rabindranath stood before the world as the greatest Indian poet since Kalidasa. For Indian writers he became at once the image of a supreme artist and the symbol of all that India stood for. For them he was more an abiding source of inspiration than a temporary influence, more like a Himalayan peak than a passing storm.

Rabindranath contributed to the cultural climate of India and even when any direct influence of his work cannot be traced, it is not possible to miss his presence as an important cultural component.

As far as Gujarat is concerned, Rabindranath was lucky in having no imitators, who more often than not parody the master. Tagore's influence has been more on the mind of Gujarat than its literature. Gujarat came under the powerful influence of Tagore's personality just at the time Gandhiji had arrived on the stage of public life. One could even say that it was the Mahatma who was responsible for the intimate contact of Gujarat with the Poet.

The inmates of the Phoenix Ashrama in South Africa had reached India a little ahead of Gandhiji and when he returned home in 1915, Rabindranath was playing host to them. The Mahatma visited Gurudev's Santiniketan. This sharing of interest in ashrama-life throws light on the affinity between the two great men.

Then, in 1920, when his political work was in full swing Gandhiji took special care to advise the conveners of the

Gujarati Sahitya Parishad which was being held at Ahmedabad to invite the Poet. The date was changed to suit the Poet's convenience. Gandhiji wrote to him : 'I sincerely hope that the capital of Gujarat will have the honour of receiving you during the Easter' Rabindranath's address at this conference was one of his best public speeches. It began with one of his favourite themes construction is for a purpose, creation for joy. This address, which deserves to be more widely known: has been included by Prof. Soares in his edition of Tagore's *Lectures and Addresses*. Gurudev has put the Gujarati Sahitya Parishad under a heavy debt. The Parishad, which the inaugurator of this conference, Sri Munshi, has served for about a quarter of a century, is to hold its next session during the Rabindranath Centenary year in the city of his birth and the members are looking forward to paying homage to the Poet by making a pilgrimage to Santiniketan — the Temple of Internationalism, which he has bequeathed on us.

To return to the conference of April 2, 1920 : an interesting incident took place at Ahmedabad. After Tagore had finished reading his speech, there came a demand for its translation into Gujarati The great savant, Narasimhrao Divatia, ecstatically remarked that one ought to learn the English language in order to enjoy the beauties of the Poet's speech Gandhiji had been a little late in coming to the meeting. He hurriedly went through the beginning portion and gave a gist of the speech in simple language

The names of two of Gandhiji's close associates stand out when we think of Tagore's influence on the literature and thought of Gujarat : Kakasaheb Kalelkar and the late Mahadevbhai Desai Kakasaheb was working as a visiting teacher at Santiniketan, and it was at this time that he came into contact with Gandhiji Absorbed in Tagore's work and personality he joined the Mahatma in the fight for freedom.

When the Poet was invited to Ahmedabad, it fell to Kakasaheb's lot to introduce him to the people of Gujarat and the fine article he wrote of him then was his first contribution to Gujarati. Thus the name of a poet from Bengal is associated with the writings of Kaka Kalelkar who is the greatest gift of Maharashtra to the cultural life of Gujarat. Kakasaheb has written prefaces to translations of Tagore's works and he is one of the finest interpreters of Tagore. As a creative writer and thinker he shares quite a few things with Tagore but it would be difficult to point out any direct influence of Tagore in his work. What deserves special mention, however, is the fact that all that is best in Gandhiji, as well as in Tagore, finds expression as a harmonious blend in the writings of authors such as Kaka Kalelkar.

Mahadevbhai Desai, in collaboration with Naraharibhai Parikh, rendered the *Chitrangada* and the *Vidaya-Abhishap* into rhythmic Gujarati prose. He translated three of Gurudev's songs *Yadi tor dak ... ekla chalo re*, *Tor apan jane ... chalbe na* and *Jeevan jakhan sukaye jay* . . ., preserving the music of the original.

Thanks to the work of these associates of Gandhiji, Tagore became a living influence at the Gujarat Vidyapeeth, which had become a radiating centre of culture in Gujarat. A number of Vidyapeeth men — Karsandas Manek, Girdhari Kripalani, Nagindas Parekh, Ramanlal Soni among others translated Tagore's works. Sri Nagindas Parekh studied at Santiniketan and has dedicated his life to the presenting of Rabindranath's work to Gujarat in its pristine purity and popularising it.

The direct influence of Tagore on Gujarati writing in the 'twenties was inconsiderable. Perhaps Botadkar's 'Urmila' can be traced to Tagore's *Kavver Upekshita*. Prithu Shukla wrote a couple of books of prose-poems, reminiscent of the style of the *Gitanjali* (English translation). 'Dhoomketu', the first great exponent of Gujarati short story, culled material from the

Visva-Bharati quarterly and his stories were suffused with poetry, but his style was contemporary in nature, more self-conscious and concise But for his 'Post-office' which has the same theme — an old father pining for his daughter — as that of 'Kabuliwallah', one can hardly find any influence of Tagore in his work.

Others who like the author began writing in the early 'thirties were under the dual influence of Gandhiji and Tagore. Our evening prayers in the jail barracks in 1930 ended with *Jana-gana-mana*. However, we were keen on introducing social realism in what we wrote By 1932 socialistic ideas were also becoming popular amongst writers

There was yet another reason, connected with the history of the growth of Gujarati poetry, which prevented us from imitating Tagore, though we almost lived in him Nanalal, the foremost Gujarati poet of the day, had been writing *vers libre* since 1898 He was a master of rhetoric, which however lapsed into a florid style whenever inspiration flagged The younger poets rather thought better of the work of Prof. B K. Thakore, who demanded a hard core of thought and an adequate metrical rhythm in poetry. Prithu Shukla's spasmatic prose-poems had stood discredited The new writers were for something concrete, something sinewy. Sir Ramanbhai, a prominent critic, once described Tagore's work (which he had only read in English) as marmalade without fruit pieces Those who read Rabindranath only in English are apt to miss much of him. He himself once suggested that the English renderings were false coin. Mr. Hallam Tennyson pointed out this year on the B B. C how the translation 'Into that heaven of freedom my father, let my country awake" leaves out *'āghāt kari'* of the original. It is a pity the English and not the original Bengali *Gitanjali* was translated into Indian languages Some of the translations are simply unreadable It is a pity that Indian

writers of the late nineteenth and the early twentieth century worked in isolation with little knowledge of one another's work. No wonder Tagore's mode of writing did not much excite the new generation of poets who began writing in the early 'thirties.

The late Dr. Shridharani, the most gifted lyricist of this period went to study at Santiniketan. He used Tagore's favorite symbol of 'Raja' in one of his best poems and may be his 'Jhanjhavat' has been influenced by Tagore's poetry.

It is the work of Prahlad Parekh, another poet who studied at Santiniketan, that shows the influence of Tagore's poetry in a purer and surer form. Prahlad is a niggardly writer but some of his work has an assured place in Gujarati poety. His first collection came out in 1940, which was a turning point in Gujarati poetry. Sensitive regard for beauty was the keynote of the new style and perhaps Tagore presided over that sea-change.

There was a reaction against Prof. Thakore's emphasis on thought-content in poetry The Professor had indeed turned some writers away from sentimental musicality. The newer poets by the end of the 'forties were writing unabashedly the poetry of emotions. This was mostly in songs Songs, beautiful songs, had all through been written by poets, and Nanalal had given the most cherishable specimens during his peak period. But the curious thing to note is that these new songs bore some semblance to those of Tagore, in texture, in music as well as in content.

A sort of mysticism was taking hold of some of the writers. By the late 'forties Sri Aurobindo's influence was being felt on some Gujarati poets. To them the Tagore mode of song came in handy. About two decades ago Snehrashmi wrote songs, tinged with mysticism and vibrating with Tagorean

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The author while experimenting with the writing of a verse-play wrote in the early 'forties several dialogue-poems, some of which were a little more elaborate than just dialogues Those experiments would remind a Tagore-student of the Poet's famous dialogue-poems

The work of some fiction-writers such as 'Darshak', Bachubhai Shukla, Sneharashmi and Kisansinh Chavda bears some semblance to the work of Tagore either in tone or in treatment Bachubhai Shukla also popularized in Gujarat the dance-drama as he found it in Santiniketan

Niranjan Bhagat, a modernist poet, began with writing songs *a la* Tagore, and in Bengali to boot Among the newer writers Suresh Joshi seems to take to Tagore's manner with ease. This is perhaps the bane of his poetry. But he cannot help it, for so much of Tagore has gone into his aesthetic make-up In fact I do not know a greater Tagorite in Gujarat than Joshi. He is a fastidious critic and is one of those who are responsible for breathing new life into the short story in Gujarati As a story writer he is out and out a modernist But even in his short stories, as in his speeches, one comes across passages with the unmistakable stamp of Tagore. He is still young and it will be interesting to watch how the two veins in his writing develop. Mention must also be made of the late Jhaverchand Meghanee's renderings of some of Tagore's poems in his '*Rabindra-veena*'. It is not so much a case of translating as of redelivery.

One should also bear in mind the influence of the critical essays of Tagore I vividly remember how, as a college student, I would sit on the banks of the Sabarmati and recite to myself over and over again, for sheer joy, passages from the translation of *Prachin Sahitya* This book cast a spell on [illegible]

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One should also bear in mind the influence of the critical essays of Tagore. I vividly remember how, as a college student, I would sit on the banks of the Sabarmati and recite to myself over and over again, for sheer joy, passages from the translation of *Prachin Sahitya*. This book cast a spell on all

students of literature and the ideas contained in it became widely known.

Noteworthy is Dr. Anandashankar Dhruva, who commented now and again on Tagore's observations on the nature of poetry and art. Himself a philosopher and critic, Dr. Dhruva did much to present Tagore's ideas in their proper philosophical setting. To give just one example: Rabindranath had written an article in the Visva-Bharati quarterly based on a quotation from the Athrarva-veda, that art was what left over (*uchchhishta*) from a sacrifice. Dr. Dhruva added that all that remains after the necessities of life are met is not art, but only the noblest part (*ut*) of what is left over (*shishta*).

The ideas and ideals Rabindranath stood for spread more or less through our languages. But they do need to be re-iterated, of course not in cold blood. They are to be presented alive by those who would embody them, from an inner need, in a newer national and international context.

Equally important is to remember what Rabindranath wanted us to. On his seventieth birthday he said that he was *'vichitrer doot'* — the messenger of Beauty. He said, *'āmi Kavimātra'* — I am first and last a poet.

Great poets are to be discovered. As a matter of fact poetry requires to be discovered afresh again and again. The West in its wisdom discovered Rabindranath for us, Indians. But we can make him ours only by discovering him ourselves. Adoration would not be enough. In 1913 when all India went crazy, he wrote to his English artist-friend Rothenstein: 'They honour the honour in me.' In one of his last poems he warns us: *'āmār Kirtire āmi kari nā visvās'* — I do not lay much store by my reputation. The poet asks not for honour but love, '... *mān nay, kichhu bhālobāsā,'* — and love means understanding.

Shakespeare has been discovered not only by English

writers but by continental writers, like Goethe and Croce — to name only two. I do hope that an era of rediscovering Tagore, an era of real intimate study of the artistic excellence and import of Tagore's work, will be inaugurated in national languages. I can say that in Gujarati signs of such a study are already visible.

RABINDRANATH AND GUJRATI LITERATURE

K. M. MUNSHI

THE INFLUENCE of Gurudeva as a national poet as seen in different parts of the country has been more or less a common impulse, an impulse literary and creative. It is this which has inspired new forms, new sentiments and new emotions. Gurudeva represented cultural nationalism at its most exquisite form and when we were struggling to find the national soul he became a kind of an inspirer in every part of this country though intrinsically Bengali he was basically Indian. Everything Indian appealed to him.

Gurudeva's influence cannot be measured in terms of translations of his works, but on whole so far as Gujrat is concerned, the influence of Tagore has been of a peculiar character Looking back, at the age of 17 or 18 he was living in Ahmedabad. His elder brother Satyendranath Tagore was a District and Sessions Judge of Ahmedabad. He also had studied Gujrati very well and could deliver discourses in the Prarthana Samaj which was more or less a limb of Brahmo Samaj. Maharshi Devendranath Tagore is accorded as having delivered his addresses there when he came. So from that time Rabindranath's contact with Gujrat began. He wrote "Hungry Stones" in what is called now the Government house in Ahmedabad, old Moghul palace, where Satyendranath lived. In that way in some extent the earlier inspiration of some of the works of the poet began in Gujrat. So far as Gujrat is concerned Bengali literature had also a great impact on the early literature of Gujrat. Narayan Hem Chandra who knew Bengali very well introduced Bengali authors to the Gujrati public. Iswar Vidyasagar, Bankim Chandra, Damodar Mukherjee and several other authors whose works were translated in the Gujrati language were also known. The influence of Gurudeva's works was originally not so strong but when he got the Nobel Prize in 1913, the whole

country met him at Gujrat and went mad over the poet Gitanjali was translated, several of his songs were translated, and he became idol of the people. But the highwater mark of contact came when Gandhiji came to India and Santiniketan gave an asylum to the inmates of Phoenix Ashrama. Really the influence on Gujrat could be traced to this great friendship, the deep love that existed between Gandhiji and Gurudeva and the highwater mark of that combined influence was reached in April of 1920, when the Gujrati Sahitya Parishad was held under the Presidentship of Mahatma Gandhi Gurudeva was invited there, came and was received with great enthusiasm and this created a tremendous impact on Gujrat's life and literature So much so that later many members of Gandhiji's Vidyapith came to Santiniketan and a sort of intimate contact sprang up between Santiniketan and Gandhiji's School The direct effect of this was that a large number of men and women came to live in Santiniketan At one time as many as many as 265 Gujrati inmates were in Santiniketan but the greatest intrepreter of Gurudeva was Kakasahib Kalelkar. He was a Visiting Professor of Santiniketan and then he joined Gandhiji He was Maharasthraian by birth and Bengali and Gujrati by adoption. In his lectures and writings he introduced Gurudeva more effectively than anybody else. Mahadev Desai, Gandhiji's Secretary also rendered some other writings of Gurudeva In view of the closer contact between Gandhiji and Gurudeva literary figures who surrounded Gandhiji took to Rabindra literature in a very effective way Kakasahib for a long time had a great educational influence. A large number of students under his inspiration devoted themselves to the rendering of Rabindra literature on a large scale

Santiniketan culture had a great impact on Gujrat. Music in Gujrat was influenced by Rabindra Sangeet Dancing which became more or less a domestic art was modelled largely on

Santiniketan education. It happened that the fascination for indigenous culture was disappearing, largely because of the great influence which Bombay life exerted on Gurjati life. Bombay is an international port, and was, therefore, dominated by English influence. Parsi community, a part of the Gujrati life, was highly westernised and their impact on other sections was very large. And so there was a sort of cultural vacuum. In the meantime Santiniketan culture came along to fill up the vacuum by way of the introduction of a new form of dancing and drama which became immensely popular. Coming back to literature, we had the main current of Gujrati literature and also what may be called a side current. Rabindranath's literature considerably influenced what may be called a side literature upto a period. Regarding poetry it may be mentioned that we had two poets, first we had Nanalal and then Thakur. Both of them were great poets in their own way. Nanalal had technique of his own and was inimitable because his sentiment and style were largely unique. He hardly left school but he fascinated the literary men for a period of over 20 years and therefore the influence of Rabindranath was not felt in poetry. Then came Thakur. In the meantime Gujrati younger literary men inspired by Gandhiji's movement and personality were more directing themselves towards Thakur's poetry and thought than to etherial emotion and the delicate touch which was represented by Gurudeva. But at the same time the literary influence of Gurudeva was also evident among some of the poets. For instance Prahlad was directly influenced by Gurudeva's poetry. It may be said that the emotion and the delicacy of touch of Gurudeva did not influence Gujrati literature as sufficiently as it did in other States. Two of the younger poets Prahlad and Suresh Joshi had tried to absorb the delicacy of touch for which Gurudeva stood. In that way there was an influence of Rabindranath on the main current in Gujrati

literature. As regards other forms of literature I don't think that the novel was influenced by Gurudeva at all Short stories were considerably influenced and some of his plays were staged in schools. But in our dramatic literature the main current has not been directly influenced by Gurudeva. But what may be called the training ground, the Santiniketan Culture, and the influence of Rabindranath left their mark on the schools and the colleges and there was a strong impact of Rabindra personality on various aspects of literature and life. Rabindra influence cannot be measured in terms of dramas, of the renderings of his poems but the influence of a personality like Rabindranath lies in creating new impulses, and in inspiring fresh and vigorous forms of beauty

RABINDRANATH AND MALAYALAM LITERATURE

G. SANKARA KURUP

WHEN in the early twenties, Gurudeva visited Kerala in the company of Andrews and others with his message of the Visvabharati, he had already become a by-word in this small green strip of the South as one of the greatest national heroes, poet and story teller, playwright, philosopher and patriot, and much more than this, as the latest link in the long line of our rishis. His stories were much in vogue, while his essays and lectures with their emphasis on a new humanism were being rendered into Malayalam by such enthusiasts as Sri Puthezath Raman Menon and Sri V. Unnikrishnan Nair. But although as Nobel prize winner he claimed spontaneous admiration and evoked just pride in the Malayalee heart, Gurudeva was only dimly understood as poet. Acclaimed as the dawn-light if not the morning star of Indian cultural and literary renaissance, Tagore as poet remained much of an enigma. Neither the austere English version of the Gitanjali, nor even the introductory assessment of W. B. Yeats, which struck too solemn a note, served to render the poems familiar and popular. Tagore's works in the realm had the aspect of distant Himalayan peaks, sublime and adorable while the flowery valleys, and green foot-hills with their warmth, colour and humanity were hidden from view. It was perhaps only recently that a nearer approach was made in a renewed sense of wonder and appreciation.

In the early twenties our literature was making its hesitant passage from classicism to romanticism. Still, the three great romantic poets of Kerala, Asān, Vallathol and Ullur were only too ready to pay homage to Rabindranath. Asān, perhaps the most progressive poet of that early period, had had the good fortune to stay in Bengal for a time and imbibe from almost the fountain-head, the spirit of the new Renaissance. In his

poem of welcome to Gurudeva at Trivandrum, entitled Divya-kokilam, Asān made special mention of the Catholicism of Tagore's sympathy, his idealism which uplifted the earth unto the heavens and the splendour of Rabi which mopped up the age-long darkness of the land. Vallathol was apparently thrilled by the nationalist in Tagore and Ullur by the Vedic rishi in him. Still, it must be admitted that the actual forging and moulding influence was limited in extent This was natural, as, in addition to other restrictions, our literary art had not reached that stage of purity and maturity to be readily and lightly sensible to that influence. The classic preoccupations with the balance of form and content, words and their nuances of meanings and conceits were obstacles in the full throated flow of romantic lyricism in Malayalam poetry and Tagore was the lyric poet par excellence. When Gurudeva spoke of his poetry as shedding its cumbersome burden of meaning and soaring like a winged horse unto the pure empyreon, or when he likened his poesy to the restless surging oceans, endeavouring to embrace, vivify and lift up the stiff and solid earth, the poets and people of Kerala, disciplined in tenets of classic restraint, could not very readily follow the lead. And the critics too were not much better. When, in the first All-Kerala literary conference in the late twenties, a young critic read an admirable study of Gurudeva, there were eminent critics who replied by sneering at the foggy mysticism and the misleading symbolism that, they said, confronted them in the pages of the Gitanjali. In fact this prospensity of the critics and their followers to read uncertain and mystic meanings into Tagore's poems proved a bar to proper appreciation of even such simple, beautiful and homely poems as are included in the Gardener and the Crescent Moon In spite of eminent interpreters of Tagore like Karnikara Kumara Pillai and Sanjayan, a wall of prejudice was built up and the only doorway led to the literature of the

West. Also, the tradition of Vaisnavite poets or the movement of Vedic Revival which provided a proper intellectual climate for the poet of Bengal, were scarcely felt on the Kerala Seaboard, which was bastioned in the Puranic lore and traded for the new literary goods of the Occident.

It was mostly the lyrics of Shelly and Keats, Byron and Browning that fascinated our younger poets ; while the short story writers, novelists and dramatists frankly followed the footsteps of their European masters. True, the stories of Tagore set the pace in weaning us away from the old style tales, and some new comers, poets at heart, like P. C. Kuttikrishnan and S. K. Pottekat, owe much more to Tagore than would appear ; but the majority sought to be clever artisans. in relating with a kick, the real incidents of life, or assumed the role of social critics for which they found ready response from the reading public. As to novels, many of the works of Bankim, and of Tagore himself, like Chokher Bali, Chathuradhyayi and the Home and the World had been well received in Translation but these failed to leave a lasting impress ; and it was again the Western models that found the closest adherents and emulators. Tagore's influence was, perhaps, least felt in the field of dramatic out-put.

Our old Sanskritic and Tamil stage, with all their artificialities were soon to be followed by the socio-satirical type in the manner of Moliere and the new theatre, preoccupied with social, domestic, and economic problems in the style of Ibsen or Shaw. Tagore's plays, line Muktadhara, Chitrangada and Sarodotsavam were indeed translated but these mostly lay imprisoned in print, rarely seeing the foot lights of our stage. It is more than a possibility that Tagore's lyrical plays may still enthrall large audience when we have learnt to love and appreciate poetic drama in its natural setting, in its simplicity, depth and grandeur. Gurudeva's centenary has happily served

to touch off a lively interest in this line and many of his plays are being translated, and let us hope that at long last, they would come into their own as something fresh and significant on our drab and dull social stage.

More than anything else, social and economic problems, as hinted above, have been the main springs of our recent literary creation, so much so, that Tagore bas assumed the position of a luminary on the horizon. Yet, poets like Sri K. K. Raja and many others have felt and been uplifted by his influence in whatever work of value they have done. As for myself, Gurudeva's concept of nature and the universe as the beautiful and everchanging expression of the one eternal and essential spirit, his warm and all-embracing humanism, often termed internationalism, which springs from this concept and the chastity and beauty of his lyrical pieces, have been an abiding inspiration to me in my outlook and literary output. It is this, more than anything else, that prompted me to translate Gitanjali from the original text and to render a hundred and one of his longer and less-known lyrics into my mother-tongue. Samples of these poems have been very well received and have led some readers at least to, what they call, a rediscovery of Tagore. For me at least, translation of these poems has been a task of love and a rewarding spiritual experience.

Gurudeva's works, in all their variety, are but colourful and characteristic expressions of his stupendous personality. How far his works have been understood, assimilated or emulated is a matter of detail. What counts is the influence of this immense personality, with its comprehensive poetic vision, almost a heritage from the Vedic past, its warm affection for nature and for man, all the world over, of its healthy optimistic faith in life and its loveliness, which sings : "The sky is honeyed, the earth is honeyed" ; and that personality has left its indelible stamp on our thought, outlook, art, and literature, with promise

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of greater intimacy and deeper insight for the future. It is truer to say that we have been progressing towards him., Probably, he may ever remain an eternal symbol of inspiration as no age or country can fully contain him.

RABINDRANATH AND MALAYALAM LITERATURE

C. Kunhan Raja

The name of Rabindranath Tagore has become a house-hold word in Malabar. There is no name that is more honoured in the country than that of Rabindranath Tagore People worship him just like their own national poet of old, Tunchat Ezhuttassan. Ezhuttassan's songs, the Malayalam renderings of the Ramayana and the Bharata are heard sung in every Malabar home from the time they were written and they continue in that same position of honour even now. The same must be said of the songs of Rabindranath Tagore also, rendered into Malayalam and sometimes into English From very ancient times there had been some sort of tie binding the two peoples, the Bengalis and the Malayalis together. There is also some mutual resemblance in the looks of the two peoples. Many Bengalis have told me that though they can distinguish a Bengali quite easily in a crowd of Indians, they fail in this when they have to meet the Malayalis , the mistake the Malayalis to be Bengalis, and when they meet a Malayali, they sometimes start talking in Bengali The Sakteya form of worship, the Tantric School of religion, the adoration of Kali, in these matters there is a close tie between the Bengalis and the Malayalis When I went to parts of East Bengal, I felt that I was in my homeland of Malabar, so far as the scenery was concerned. Both of them have a preference for pure white dress. Both in Bengal and in Malabar, the joint family is found The Ashtanga Hridaya system of medicine is specially in vogue in Malabar and in Bengal, in India The Navadwipa Logic had been very popular among the scholars of Malabar from the earliest times There is a story in Malabar that when a ruler of Malabar asked a scholar what he desired to get from Bengal, the reply was that he was very eager to secure a set of the works of Gadadhara Bhatta It is not

because Bengal was a place of pilgrimage like Badarinath and Prayag and Gaya and Jagannath, that there had been this contact between the people inhabiting the extreme north-east and the extreme south-west of India. The contact has been on the side of culture. Thus the Gita-govinda of Jayadeva has been ever popular among the Malayalis and has been imitated by a royal poet of Malabar in his Krishnan Attam or Krishna Play. The present art of Kathakali owes much to this dance drama of the royal poet in imitation of Jayadeva's work. In the same way, the Krishna-karnamrita of Lila Suka is more popular in Bengal outside Malabar than anywhere else in India. This background is necessary to understand and appreciate the special impression which the poet of Bengal who has become one of the greatest of world poets, has made on the people of Malabar. People may not be aware of it; but the fact about a thing is a stronger factor in human relations than the knowledge thereof

In recent times Malayalis had been going to Bengal for various purposes, as students and as belonging to both the State and private services. Many of them have a talent for literature and they come into contact with the literature of Bengal. The work of Swami Vivekananda, the high position which he secured for Indian culture in all the countries of the world and the establishment of the Order of the Ramakrishna Mission were other factors which attracted Malayalis to Bengal, and which brought the Malayalis into contact with the conditions in Bengal. In this way, the relation between Malayalis and Bengalis has its root in the long past, has been steady and continues even now.

One of the greatest poets of modern times in Malabar, the Late *Kumaran Asan* had been studying advanced works in Logic under a great scholar in Calcutta and at that time he had personal contacts with some of the great poets and writers in

Bengali. All that we know is of a rather general nature the poet met with a premature death in a boat accident whe he was still rather young and he has not left behind any recor of his life in Calcutta He was studying Sanskrit of an advanc standard there. His friends say that he had known of th poems of Tagore at that time, along with the works of grea writers like Bankim Chandra Chatterji. Personally I can sa that I have heard of his name when I was in the schools pric to 1910. When the modern Review was started, that was th channel through which the people of Malabar had closer an wider contacts with the poems and other writings of Tagor Many stories of Tagore have been rendered into Malayalar ever prior to his name becoming world wide through the awar of Nobel Prize There is some close affinity between a work c Tagore and one of the best works of Asan, and it is suppose that Asan had known of the work of Tagore when he wa studying in Calcutta.

There are many Tagore societies in the various centre in Malabar. The students of literature and peopl with literary tastes and interests meet there and study an discuss the poetry of Tagore, arrange for lectures and fc discourses on the subject and thus make the poems of Tagor known to the people. Tagore's poetry has contributed to th Malayalam literature more material than the works of an literary person of the world in any language ; many of th works of the great poet have been translated into Malayalan and interpreted in Malayalam. Besides many of the works o Tagore available in Malayalam as translations by the best amon the modern poets, there have been studies on Tagore alsc written by eminent literary men of the country. Such literar activities relating to the poetry of Tagore became more anc more intense and more voluminous as years went towards th close of the second decade of this century

It is not merely through the translations of the works of Tagore that the literature of Malabar has been enriched. The literary current had taken a new course during the last 45 years and Tagore's poetry has made its influence felt in changing the course of the literary current in the language. From the earliest time known in the history of Malayalam literature, which may be put to about 800 A. D., there have been two sources from which the material for the development of the literature in the language was being gathered. One is Sanskrit and the other is English, even the material from other modern foreign language has been imported through the medium of English in the main.

There are evidences to show that the Malayalam language must have taken up a literary turn by about the beginning of the nineth century; actual literary specimens of the nature of of poetry go back only to about the 13th century. From that time onwards, Sanskrit has been the mine from which were dug out the material for the production of poetry in the language, in the matter of theme, form and even vocabulary Till about the beginning of the current century Sanskrit remained the main source though Malayalam had been in contact with the other South Indian Languages and Literatures; Tamil and the other literatures of South India had no influence worth-mentioning in the development of the literature either in content or in form. So far as the influence of Sanskrit is concerned, it was a friendly union between two languages. Malayalam never surrendered its soul and its genius in this mutual association. In point of metres, Malayalm poetry has been essentially Malayalam, with Sanskrit metres also introduced on an equal basis, both being interspersed for specific purposes I may say that in literary patterns where both the sets of metres are introduced the allocation is more or less what is found in the Gita Govinda of Jayadeva where verses in Sanskrit metres and

songs are mixed together. This remained the standard till the days of the Kathakali literature of recent periods In a large number of works, there are only Malayalam metres with no Sanskrit metre at all, this is what is found in the works of Cherusseri, Ezhuttassan the Panikkars and Kunjan Nambiyar. The number of works in which there are only Sanskrit metres in early Malayalam literature, can be counted on one's fingers and they are all small works, like the Chandrotsava and the Sandesa Kavyas

About a century ago, there came about a great change. Poets like Venmani (father and son), Naduvam (also father and son), Kochunni and Kunhikuttan Thampurans of Cranganore Family, Kerala Varma and Raja Raja Varma, Pantalam, Ullur, Kundur Narayana Menon, Oduvil Kunhikrishna Menon, Kathollil Achyuta Menon, Oravankara and Sivolli, Ku and a host of poets who contributed to the development of Malayalam poetry wrote their poems in Sanskrit metres, and Sanskrit metres were alone honoured as the right medium for high-class poetry. Some of them wrote sometimes in Malayalam metres, but they were not considered the real contributions which made them famous and they were more or less recreations and not serious poetry in the estimation of both the authors and of the people I do not know of any epoch in the history of Malayalam literature when Sanskrit metres had such a hold on the poets of Malabar as during the first sixty years of the past one hundred years

The credit goes to two of the great poets of the modern period for elevating Malayalam metres into their earlier position of honour, they are Kumaran Asan and Vallathol I do not know how far the former was influenced in this move by the poetry of Tagore in Bengali metres I can say definitely that Vallathol was under the influence of the form of Tagore's poetry in this matter, as I knew him very intimately during

this period and had also been in constant contact with him. I have helped him in understanding the poetry of Tagore through English translation, since his own knowledge of English was rather meagre and negligible. It was at a later time that he was able to get the help of those who could read and understand the poetry of Tagore in the original Bengali.

In the matter of language, it must be said that the Malayalam literature was always pure and the Sanskrit element has been limited to such words as had become regular contents in Malayalam vocabulary. In spite of the prominence given to the Sanskrit metres in the poetry at the close of the last century and the beginning of this century, it must also be made clear that the spirit of Malayalam prosody remained in so far as nearly all the poets who counted, except a few, adopted the device of alliteration on the second line in a verse. This is not an original feature in Malayalam poetry, but a later arrival; but when it had an entry, it remained an important factor in Malayalam poetry During this poetry, archaism was studiously avoided and the language of poetry and of prose remained more or less identical, as was the case with the prose and poetry of Sanskrit literature. This was another Sanskritism in the period that just preceded the present epoch of Malayalam. Here also the poetry of Tagore had a great influence. The poets developed a new language for poetry, just like the poetry of earlier days, which was slightly different from the classical language with a touch of archaism. In Tagore's poetry I have seen even words that are confined to the Rigvedic language like Krandasi. Such an archaism is in the nature of Malayalam poetry, as was exhibited by the poets of old

Short poems like Lyrics and Odes, with Nature and the common people and their life as theme beame another predominent feature in modern Malayalam poetry, and here also the

influence of the poetry of Tagore is marked. Even in Sanskrit poetry where we find a lot of Nature and where the common people are introduced freely, the chief characters are taken from a certain level in social organisation, and others come in only as of subordinate importance. But in modern Malayalam poetry we find practically nothing of kings and the aristocrats and the wealthy and divine personalities As a matter of fact the people of the immediate preceding epoch did not think of any problems in the life of man They were content with the situations in which they found themselves. All of them came from what may be called the higher levels of society with little of inabilities, with little room for any worries in life So they wrote good poetry about good subjects for the good people.

The Bengal agitation subsequent to the partition of Bengal created a new situation in India and the mind of the Indians took a new turn in their approach to the problems of the life of the nation. That change made a difference to the emotional set up of the people in Malabar also. Political independence, freedom from economic want, eradication of social evils, equality of status and chances in the civic life, a pride of nationalism, elevation of the country and of the people in international relationships, both culturally and economically and all such problems became live issues in the life of even the common people The war and the new situations intensified such an emotional stir. There was the poetry of Tagore available in plenty at that time to give a guidance to the people, to give a form and a structure to the emotional stir of the people and it also gave the right lead to the poets who directed the mental activities of the people

Perorations from public platforms and writings in newspapers and orders issued from places of authority cannot change a nation, at best they may give a jerk from outside What really changes a nation is some sort of movement from within

their emotions and this can be effected only by poets ; the people do not experience any sort of external influence when they read or hear a poem, the change being an inner phenomenon. Really the poets represent the feelings and the genius of the people ; they are aware of it while the people may not be so. The poets bring such matters within the awareness of the people. Tagore represented the longings and aspirations of the people of the whole of India, and Tagore's leadership in this respect was brought to the experience of the people of Malabar by the poets of the locality, who could respond to the influence of Tagore, far better and far more effectively than the common people. People are aware only of their individualistic aspirations and wants ; they do not have within their awareness the common aspirations of the people as a nation and it is the poets who know such a common feature within the nation and who can bring it within the awareness of the people.

Within Sanskrit poetry there are the elements of Nature, mysticism, symbolism and others in the earlier phases. Rigvedic poetry is full of them, and so are the Upanishads and the Ramayana and the Mahabharata and Kalidasa. Some of the devotional lyrics in Sanskrit are full of such features. But at a later stage, poetry became rather formal in Sanskrit literature. But Tagore is full of the spirit of the earlier phases of Sanskrit poetry and this is another new feature that found its way into Malayalam poetry in the modern age. Although a large number of the poets of the modern epoch in Malayalam have imbibed this new spirit and although their poetry is full of such features, I must confess that the representive poet of Malabar in the matter of mysticism and symbolism is Sri G. Sankara Kurup. Unlike my relations with the other leader of the new school of Malabar poets, Vallathol, I must confess that my acquaintance with poet Sankara Kurup is only from his poetry ; I have never met him. From his

poetry I note that he finds the world that we see in quite another way, full of a new life and a new significance and a new purpose. That is what we find in the poetry of Tagore also.

The modern poets of Malabar, poets of the new school, are all acquainted with the poetry of the early nineteenth century in England like Wordsworth, Shelly, Keats and Coleridge They knew the influence which the French Revolution had on the art of some of those poets. But we do not see any reflection of the spirit of the poetry of the Romantic period in the early nineteenth century in English, in the poetry of the immediately preceding period. So the new features that we notice as a very conspicuous element in modern poetry are not what the poets acquired from their knowledge of the new movements in English poetry, though they all knew the literature. It is a new start, and the poetry of Tagore has exerted a great influence on the minds and the arts of the modern poets of Malabar, in the matter of the introduction of such features into the literature In a sense it is a revival of the traditions of Indian poetry starting from the Vedas But really it came into the poetry of Malabar through the poetry of Tagore.

We speak of the great masters of poetic art in Malayalam like Cherusseri and Ezhuttassan and Kunchan Nambiyar. We may divide the epochs and types of poetry in Malayalam on the basis of the works of such masters in the art So far as modern poetry is concerned, I shall not at all be a target of criticism if I assert that the modern epoch may be truly styled the Tagore Epoch I will have to enter into a biographical strain if I am to say anything about Tagore's knowledge of Malayalam poetry. During my stay at the Santiniketan for a year I had the privilege of meeting him practically every day in the morning and in the evening And we used to talk

about Malayalam poetry and its techiniques and types. We talked more of metres, how the poets handled the same metrical pattern for different effects, and I was amazed that he could understand such techniques much more than myself though I was supposed to have made a special study of the problem. He could help me in scanning many lines which had been insoluble riddles to me.

When I say that the modern epoch in Malayalam poetry may truly be styled the Tagore epoch, I am not at all belittling the poets and their genius and their originality. To be able to respond to the art of another great poet and to be able to reflect such art and to transmit it in new wave-lengths of another medium to the people who can catch up only such wave-lengths, shows the height of poetic genius in such media. Only a truly great poetic genius can reflect such art of another great poet and transmit it to his fellow countrymen through his own poetry. In ancient times, the poetry of Veda Vysa and Valmiki has been transmitted to the ordinary people who could not have direct access to them, by great poets like Ezhuttassan and Cherusseri and a similar role has been taken up by the great modern poets in Malabar. Such is the admiration of the people for Tagore in Malabar that Vallathol began to be styled Tagore, and his friends and others were generally calling him by that appellation. Without in any way undermining the part played by Vallathol in making Tagore known and felt in Malabar, I must say that Poet Sankara Kurup is a far more successful and effective representative of the spirit of Tagore in Malayalam literature. It is his poems, more than that of any single poet that makes the present age worthy of the designation of Tagore Epoch in Malayalam literature.

The real relation between Tagore and Vallathol is more in the sister art of dance, than in poetry itself. Santiniketan has

been one of the centres through which the Malabar art of Kathakali has been made known in the world, outside the Kerala Kala Mandalam of Malabar itself founded by Vallathol. Many students of the Kala Mandalam had been entertained in Santiniketan, and this has been a very strong tie that binds Kerala and Malayalam literature with Tagore.

In the form of poetry, in the content of poetry, in the purpose of poetry, Tagore has made the present Malayalam literature what it is. The age and the genius of Tagore have found worthy artists in Malabar also, to make this union really effective.

I have not added anything about the particular works and the particular poets who have rendered Tagore's works into Malayalm But I add such details as an appendix.

Appendix

I

(Some works of Rabindranath Tagore in Malayalam and about Tagore also)

Note :—The following information has been gathered from the contribution of Shri A. D. Hari Sarma in the Annual Bulletin of the National Book Stall, Kottayam, Kerala, published in April, 1961 as a special issue on the occasion of the celebration of the Centenary of Rabindranath Tagore ; I record my indebtedness to the volume.

1. Gitanjali by (1) Kizhetattu Madhavan Nair 1921
   (2) L. M. Thomas 1937
   (3) V. M. Nair
   (4) Dr. P. G. Pillai
   (5) Ezhokon Sivasankaran
   (6) G. Sankara Kurup 1919
2. Vittilum Purathum (At Home and Abroad) by Shrimathi B. Kalyani Ama 1921
3. Tagore Kathakal (Stories from Tagore) by Putthezhath Raman Menon 1919 and 1923
4. Tagore Kathakal by K. Kesavan Nair 1956
5. Katharamam (Tagore Kathakal) by Kannan Janardanan 1920
6. Chitra Shala (Small stories of Tagore and his sister) by Kannan Janardanan
7. Kathamalika (Tagore Kathakal) by V. Unnikrishnan Nair 1923
8. Vinodini by Unnikrishnan Nair 1925
9. Rajarshi Kannambra Kunhunni Nair 1950

10. Vidhivilasam A. P. Parameswaran Pillai 1950
11. Mugdharagam M. Vasudevan Unnithan
12 Snehattinte Shiksha (Penalty of Love) by Dr K. M. George
13. Tiruvezhuttu (Dak Ghar) by K. C. Pillai
14. Chaturadhyayi Puttezhattu Raman Menon
15. Pracheena Sahitya by P. K Damodaran Nambiyar 1950
16. Jeevita Smritikal by K. C Pillai 1937
17. Tagore Kanta India (Indian seen by Tagore—A few essays of Tagore) by Putthezhattu Raman Menon 1926
18 Chitrangada by V. Unnikrishnan Nair 1922
16. Ravikiranam (Two Essays and two dramas) by V. Unnikrishnan Nair 1921
20 Ravirasmikal (Dramas · Karna-kunti Samvada and Gandhari Avedan) V. Unnikrisnnan Nair 1926
21. Nartakipooja by M. Narayanan 1942
22. XSaphalyam (Chitra) Cheriyan Andrews 1957
23 Oru Manushyante Matam (The religion of man) K Ramachandran Nair 1960
24. Tagorinte Kochi Ratnangal (Small Gems of Tagore) M. K. Paul 1661

Studies on Tagore

1. Sir Rabindranath Tagore—A small picture P Kunhiraman Nayar 1938
2. Vishvamahakavi or Rabindranath Tagore by a few students 1945
3. Bharata Bhaskaran Umayanelloor Balakrishna Pillai 1948
4 Vishvamahakavi Rabindranath Tagore K. Kesavan Nair 1954
5. Mahanaya Kavalkaran—Our Great Protector by Tayat Sankaran
6. Tagore, A Study—Studies by the Academy of Poets 1957

7. Rabindranath Tagore Marjori Sykes (Translation) by T. K. Venkateswaran 1958
8. Rabindra Devan Divakara Kurup
9. Rabindranath Tagore by J. C. Palakki

Note : in many cases the date of publication has not been ascertained. In a few cases, the dates are given in the Local Era in which the year starts in the middle of August and they have been converted into Christian Era ; the dates are only approximate. Many of the works appeared much earlier in the various journals, and the dates are only about book form.

II

The following two books are in the Press :

1. Tagore by Masti Venkatesa Ayyangar, Translated by G. Sankara Kurup
2. Hasya Koutukam (a few short dramas) translated by Nillena Abraham
3. Gitanjali tr. by L. M. Thomas
4 Crescent Moon tr. by Maleshya Ramakrishna Pillai
5. Chitra tr. by Do.

III

The Kerala Sahitya Akademi has programmed to issue eight volumes of the works of Tagore in Malayalam during the year. They are :

1. Ekottara Sati (101 Poems) tr. by G Sankara Kurup.
2. Twentyone stories tr. by R. C. Sarma
3. Yogayoga (Novel) Do.
4. Prabandha Samahara I tr by Seshadri
5. Do II tr by P. K. Govinda Pillai

6. Gora (Novel) tr. by R. Parameswaran Pillai
7. Three Dramas tr by V Unnikrishnan Nair
8. Three other dramas tr. by Kainikkara Kumara Pillai

Note : In the above two items, a few have already appeared, according to the programme.

IV

The Special Bulletin of the National Book Stall, Kottayam, contains also a few articles relating to Tagore. They are .

1. Two poems (Swatanthryam and Mareechika)
2. Poetry of Tagore by Dr. Humayun Kabir (translated)
3. Our Libraries (of Tagore in Translation)
4. Tagore Satavatsaraghosha by Dr K M George
5. Two Novels of Tagore (Gora and At Home and Abroad) by S Guptan Nair
6. The Dramas of Tagore by E M J Venniyoor
7. Music of Tagore by Vijaya Raghavan
8 Biographical Sketch by Matasseri Madhava Warrier
9. Two more poems—Where is God and Mrityu

RABINDRANATH AND ASSAMESE LITERATURE

RATNAKANTA BARKAKATI

THIS writer often writes Assamese poetry. But criticism are sometimes heard that his poetry is influenced by Rabindranath. This writer, of course, admits the influence of the master-poet with nodding head. Human influence on human minds comes from all sides ; if the influence is worthy one, it is only shameful not to be able to accept the influence and admit it, because it proves the inertia of the receptive power of the mind or the heart. So this writer also will feel glorified if he has been able to pour a little sweet moonlight of poetry on his mother language, Assamese, being reflected by the influence of the rays of the poet-Sun Rabindranath.

In this context, what Rabindranath himself said is worth quoting. He said :—

"নীল নদীর তীর থেকে বর্ষার মেঘ উঠে আসে। কিন্তু যথা সময়ে সে হয় ভারতেরই বর্ষা। তাতে ভারতের ময়ূর যদি নেচে ওঠে, তবে কোনো শুচিবায়ুগ্রস্ত স্বাদেশিক তাকে যেন ভর্ৎসনা না করেন, যদি সে না নাচত তবেই বুঝতুম ময়ূরটা মরেছে বুঝি।"

(সাহিত্যের পথে, ১২৬ পৃঃ)

Generally the great man of the world, particularly the poets are like "the clouds of the bank of Nile." Wherever these clouds precipitate, wherever such rain falls, the peacock in the man dances.

The English poet Shakespeare had an all prevading influence in India, which is still working. The nation English has left India with bag and baggage, but the English poet Shakespeare still lingers. He is still here and is exerting his poetic influence on us. Why ? Because Shakespeare is not of England alone, he is of the world, he is of the world, he is of India also. Similarly Rabindranath is not of Bengal alone, he is of India, nay of the world.

This humble and insignificant writer of an interior place of Assam, when he had the fortune of having the first glimpse of Kabiguru Rabindranath at Calcutta in 1915, composed the following lines of verse being inspired at the sight of that great personality

বৈকুণ্ঠ বিহঙ্গ তুমি নৰবেশে যেন
উদিলা মৰ্ত্ত্যত,
বিশ্বপ্ৰাণ গাণ হই বাজিছে মাথোন
তোমাৰ কণ্ঠত

"You are a bird of paradise. You have come to this earth in the guise of a man and the songs that ring in your throat are but the soul of Universe".

ধন্য পূব-পছিমৰ কোলা-কুলি আজি
স্বৰ্গ ধৰাতল,
গ্ৰহ-তৰা-তপনৰ গোপন কাহিনী
ধন্য ৰাষ্ট্ৰ হ'ল !

"Blessed are the embraces of East and West, Heaven and Earth Oh ! How joyful it is that the mysteries of Heaven (the Sun, the Moon and the Stars) have been unveiled"

ধন্য আজি ভাৰতৰ ব্যাকুল হৃদয
শত শতাব্দীৰ
ধন্য ই তৃষিত প্ৰাণ দেখি বিশ্বকবি
ঋষি মূৰ্ত্তিৰ ।

"Blessed to-day is the thirsty heart of India for hundred centuries. This heart full of thirst is glorified to-day to see the sage-like universal poet."

Truly speaking Rabindranath, like Vyasha, Valmiki and other sages and the poets like Bhababhuti and Kalidasa, is the voice of modern India Carlyle while speaking of Italy,says—"Italy disunited, dismembered, disintegrated Italy is actually one

Italy produced its Dante. Italy can speak." We can also speak in the same way — India disunited by varieties of sects and communities, modern India is actually one. India produced her Rabindranath. India can speak. India has her voice. That voice is universal. It is crystal clear that Rabindranath has transcended the limits of India and has carried its influence to the other side of the sea.

Assamese Vaishnava Literature of the 16th Century

Sri Sankaradeva realising the Vishwarupa (the Universal form) of God sang :—

নাৰাযণ কাৰহু ভকতি কৰোঁ তেৰা
যত জীৱ জঙ্গম কীট-পতঙ্গম
অগ-নগ-জগ তেৰি কাযা।

Oh ! God, how could I love thee and offer oblation.
All life every fly, every work,
Everything moving and non-moving
— the Universe itself is but Thy form !"

To-day that sixteenth Century Assam is no more, no more is Mahapurusha Sri Sankardeva or Sri Madhabdeva But they have linked us with the-all-India literature and culture.

As a result of the neo-Vaishnava movement of the fifteenth century, both prose and poetry, although mainly religious, culminated in its full growth through the extra-ordinary genius of the two master minds, Mahapurusha Sri Sankardeva and Sri Madhabdeva.

Assamese language and literature suffered from the first quarter of the nineteenth century a serious set back owing to the Burmese invasion and the consequent holocaust, the Moamaria rebellion and a series of internal disorders and upheavals.

After that the British period began (1928 A. D.) It is in the beginning of the British rule that Assamese language and literature got altogether a new shock. The Assamese language was virtually banished from courts and educational institutions. Ananda Ram Dhekial Phukan, Hem Chandra Baruah and Gunabhiram Baruah, the three Assamese litterateurs stood against this and tried their level best to revive Assamese language in Courts and institutions.

The "Jonaki", the "Bijuli" and the productions of the Assamese youths ushered in a new era which may rightly be called the age of Renaissance of Assamese literature. The great Assamese litterateur Lakshminath Bezbaruah ranked foremost among this band of youths in Calcutta and played a most important part in the crusade against the onslaughts on the Assamese language by designing persons The most striking feature is that Bezbarua entered into a matrimonial alliance with an aristocratic Bengali family, i e. the Tagore family and chose as his life partner Shrijukta Pragna Sundari Devi, a niece of the illustrious poet Rabindranath Tagore, a talented lady herself, far-famed as the author of "Amish Niramish Ahar". This union of two great families of Assam and Bengal may be looked upon as a virtual union and a fusion of two apparently different cultures. As already stated, the Jonaki Age was an age of renaissance and the Assamese students' Literary Club which constituted the main platform for the propagation of the ideas and ideals of the patriotic band, played an important part during this period of the New Awakening. (quoted from Sahitya Rathi Bezbarua—by Padmadhar Chaliha
In this connection, after Bezbarua's death, a foreword by Kabiguru Rabindranath to Shri Kamaleswar Chaliha's book "Visva-rasik Bezbarua" may be quoted ·

"ভারতবর্ষের প্রত্যেক প্রদেশে তাহার ভাষার পূর্ণ ঐশ্বর্য্য উদ্ভাবিত হইলে তবেই পরস্পরের মধ্যে নিজের শ্রেষ্ঠ অর্ঘ্যের দান প্রতিদান সার্থক হইতে

পারিবে এবং সেই উপলক্ষেই শ্রদ্ধা সমন্বিত ঐক্যের সেতু প্রতিষ্ঠিত হইবে। জীবনে লক্ষ্মীনাথ বেজবরুয়ার এই সাধনা অতন্দ্রিত ছিল। মৃত্যুর মধ্যে দিয়া তাহার এই প্রভাব বললাভ করুক এই কামনা করি।"—ইতি—

রবীন্দ্রনাথ ঠাকুর।

৩০. ৮. ৩৮

This sentiment of Kabiguru is accepted by the Assamese litterateurs as a blessing for their advancement in literary activities.

It is during the British rule that attuned by thoughts and ideas of the other side of the seas, the Assamese literature has sprung a-new with life. Poetry, Drama, Novels and Stories sprang up with a new enthusiam along with its Indian tradition and heritage at the touch of this vernal breeze of Romanticism of English literature. It was not like a bolt from the blue as the so-called modern literature of to-day. Along with Keats' "Huge cloudy Symbols of High Romance" Rabindranath's poetic influence of eternal mystery also gave a *fillip* to the Assamese poetry of this age. Assamese literature in the last part of the 19th century was just coming to its own and the pioneers of this literary renaissance were men like Hemchandra Barua, Anandaram Dhekial Phukan and others. Of them the three persons dominated the scene and they were persons to bring fresh outlook and create new forms in the modern Assamese literature. Hemchandra Goswami who edited Jonaki, a literary monthly, wrote the first love sonnet in Assamese. Chandra Kumar Agarwalla who sang of man and nature was a humanist Lakshinath Bezbarua was a versatile writer—a journalist, an essayist, a dramatist and a poet, and always permeated by satirical homour. All these writers, directly or indirectly came under the pervasive influence of Rabindranath and his poetry which is the richest in the provincial literatures of India. The most remarkable influence

is the lyrical note which was lacking for the time being, and Rabindranath's poetry stimulated this particular aspect in Assamese as well as in other regional literatures of India

By way of illustration of the above, we can take note of the following writers by selecting a few pieces from their writings

The influence of Rabindra poetry (of lyrical poetry) may be traced in the writing of C K. Agarwalla and L N. Bezbarua Agrawalla's poem মাধুৰী (Sweetness) is a noted one , the sweetness of love with physical and spiritual beauty, as it were, peeps through the lines :—

ন যযৌ ন তস্থৌ
অগা-পিছা ভবিটি,
দেবী নে মানবী ঐ
মাধুৰীৰ ছবিটি !

It neither moves,
Nor is it at rest,
Vision of the Sweet
is it human or divine ?

Rabindranath's "Viday-Abhishap" (বিদায অভিশাপ) inspired L N Bezbarua to compose his love-drama "Kach aru Devajani (কচ আৰু দেৱযানী).

Along with his great achievement in raising the Indian literature to its glory, Rabindranath has brought to prominence the lyrics and ballads as well as the mystic element of the country. His work gave inspiration to Bezbarua to collect and publish the ballads and folk songs Bezbarua's 'Dhanbar Aru Ratani' (ধনবৰ আৰু ৰতনী) is an illustrious lyric of this nature .

পুৰি গ ল বৃন্দাবন
উৰি গ'ল ছাই
হে উৰি গ'ল ছাই

The glorification of man has been amply reflected in Chandra Kumar Agarwalla's poem "Manab Bandana"

আহিছে মানুহ, গইছে মানুহ,
মানুহে মাযাপী জীৱ ;
মানুহ সোঁতৰ অন্ত নাইকীয়া
বুলিলে মৰত কিয় ?

"Man comes, man goes,
There is no end of this human current.
Why then this world is called moital ?

মা নবী জীৱন দিয়া উটুৱাই
মানবী কৰম-সোঁতে
মানুহৰ মৰম বুজিবা মানুহে
ধৰম যে মৰমতে

"Dedicate your life
In this great field of human activity
-As human love is appreciated by human only."

মানুহেই লগ মানুহেই সঙ্গ
মানুহেই......
এই যে পৃথিবী স্বৰ্গতো অধিক
মানুহৰ নিজাপী ঘৰ

"Man is companion, Man is society,
Man is supreme,
This earth bettei than the heaven
is the peimanent home of man."

ৰতনীৰ ধনাই আৰু
এই পৃথিৱীত নাই
        হে এই পৃথিৱীত নাই

"Brindaban is burnt to ashes
  And blown away by wind
Ratani's Dhanai is no more
  In this world."

মৰি গৈ সোণ সৌ
তৰা এটি হ'ল
        হে তৰা এটি হ'ল
টুপি টুপি চকু লোৰে
মোলৈ চাই ৰ'ল
        হে মোলৈ চাই ৰ'ল

"After his death my darling
  has turned into the star yonder
With his tearful eyes
  He stopes gazing at me."

সৰগৰে তৰা
        হে সৰগৰে তৰা
কপৌ হেৰ বুধিদে
কি কৰোঁ কৰোঁ
        হে কি কৰোঁ কৰোঁ।

"Oh ! the star of heaven !
Oh ! Dove advise me
What I should do."

The glorification of man has been amply reflected in Chandra Kumar Agarwalla's poem "Manab Bandana"

আহিছে মানুহ, গইছে মানুহ,
মানুহে মায়াপী জীৱ ;
মানুহ সোঁতৰ অন্ত নাইকীয়া
বুলিলে মৰত কিয় ?

"Man comes, man goes,
There is no end of this human current.
Why then this world is called mortal ?

মানৱী জীৱন দিয়া উটুৱাই
মানৱী কৰম-সোঁতে
মানুহৰ মৰম বুজিবা মানুহে
ধৰম যে মৰমতে

"Dedicate your life
In this great field of human activity
As human love is appreciated by human only."

মানুহেই লগ মানুহেই সঙ্গ
মানুহেই......
এই যে পৃথিৱী স্বৰ্গতো অধিক
মানুহৰ নিজাপী ঘৰ

"Man is companion, Man is society,
Man is supreme,
This earth better than the heaven
is the permanent home of man."

মানুহেই দেৱ মানুহেই সেৱ
মানুহে বিনা নাই কেৱ ;
কৰঁা কৰঁা পূজা পাদ্য-অৰ্ঘ্য লৈ
জয় জয় মানৱ-দেৱ

"Man is God, Man is Lord
There is none above man ;
Let us worship and glorify man
—the love of humanity."

The optimism of Rabindranath has inspired Bezbarua to write in his বীন-বৰাগী (Bin Baragi) :—

নতুন প্ৰেমৰ ন-চকু জুৰি
দীপিতি ঢালিছে তাত
পুৰনি পৃথিৱী নকৈ চাই লওঁ
হে বীন এবাৰি মাত।

Oh ! the new vision of new love, how light there. Let me see anew this old earth Oh, lute ; open your voice once.

Padmashri Dr. Surjya Kumar Bhuyan is also one of the illustrious poets, whose several poems such as (উতলা) Utola, (আপোন সুৰ) Apon Sur etc., indicate the mark of Rabindranath's influence. A few lines from his "Apon Sur" are given below as illustration :—

Life and creation full of beauty
The store house of necter
World is the cherished goal of the poet
And the home of beauty
As if the lotus of love blooms there
There sings a note of some
Great object in this nature

This makes my heart dance.
All the thoughts that are linked
With the Universe
are my religion and faith.

In lyrical dramas also Rabindranath's influence is to be seen in Sonit Kuwari (Princess of Sonitpur), a love episode between Prince Aniruddha, grandson of Sri Krishna, and Usha, daughter of King Bana. This Bhagawati story has been given a new form and a beauty, symbolising the realisation of dreams and ideals through poetry and painting

Padmashri Nalinibala Debi, noted lady poet of Assam, has brought a mystic note to which is added a devotional fervour. She uses mystic symbols suggesting the unity of the individual and the unknown. This points to Rabindranath's influence on her works. A few instances will suffice. She is fond of expression like নাৱৰীয়া, যাত্ৰী, almost akin to Tagore's কাণ্ডাৰী শেষ খেয়া etc.

Her "নাৱৰীয়" (Boatman) is a famous poem In that poem she questions the boatman—

আজি মোক কোন পাৰলৈ
লৈ যাবা হেৰা নাৱৰীয়া,
নে দেখোঁ চোঁ সিপাৰৰ ৰেখা .
সন্ধিয়াই মেলি দিলে এন্ধাৰ আঁচল ধৰনীত
চকুৰে নোপোৱা হলোঁ দেখা ।

To which bank do you propose to take me
Oh the boatman ?
Neither bank is visible ;
Evening has spread her dark mantle
Over the earth ;
My eyes do not catch sight of anything.

Her another poem অজান বাতৰি (Message of the unknown) runs :

শেৱালি বনৰ উতলা পৰনে
বজালে প্ৰাণৰ নিস্মৃতি বীন
উৰিলে সজাৰ মুকলি পখীটি
নজনা জনৰ বিচাৰি চিন।

The maddening wind of Swali forest,
Set the vibration of life's silent *Vina* ;
The free bird of the cage starts flying
In pursuit of the unknown.

Another lady, Dibyaprova Bhorali, who deserves to be better known, also came under this influence. Her work is also characterised by a tender touch of mysticism e. g., in her poem আশা (Hope). She says :

I thought both you and I will be floating forever
In the eternal current in the same boat.

Her sublimated object of love having disappeared as a শুভ্ৰ তৰা (White Star) reappeared to her as God himself in her later poems লুকাই-লুকাই, নিবেদন, প্ৰতীক্ষা etc. She says :

হে কাণ্ডাৰি !
অবিৰাম শান্তি সোঁত অনুদিন আছে য'ত বৈ,
মেলি দিয়া আজি মোৰ নাওখনি সেই পাৰ লৈ।

Oh ! boatman,
Take my boat to that side of the ocean,
Where the current of eternal peace is flowing for
eternity.

And the volume (her work 'Arpana', অৰ্পণা) closes with the lines :

ই পুৰীৰ অভিলাষ হে চিৰবাঞ্ছিত মোৰ,
সি পুৰীত কৰিবাঁনে পূৰ ?

Oh ! my object of eternal desire,
Will you fulfill my desire of this life, in the life after.

In the poem মৃগ তৃষ্ণা (Mriga Trishna) the poet describes the desire of the human soul to find its own source, God, the fountain of all knowledge and bliss.

In this connection the names of the noted poets, Shri Deba Kanta Barua and Shri Kamaleswar Chaliha may, also be referred to. Deba Kanta Barua in his poem পৃথিৱী (The Earth) speaks of life in its true colour with a charming philosophy. In the field of Assamese verses Deba Kanta Barua has played a role like that of Barkakati in creating a new pattern of rhythm and rhyme under Rabindra-influence.

Parbati Prosad Barua is also an artist-poet belonging to Rabindra School of thought and music In his poem জোনাক (Moon Light) he longs for union with his beloved in the moonlit night of old.

Now, Ratnakanta Barkakati—lastly, to turn to this writer. It is always difficult to assess the work of one's own This poet has been mentally and spiritually influenced by the great poet. The small out-put of his poetic contribution in Assam bears sufficient testimony to the stamp of the great poet's impact on his language, thought, rhythm and rhyme. This has been brought out by the opinions of prominent litterateurs of Assam The leading Assamese litterateur of the Age, Late L N Bezbarua in a letter says of this writer's poetry as follows :

Sambalpur, 26. 10. 55.

My dear Barkakati,

Needless to say that I am a great admirer of your poetry. Your poetry is unique in this that there is a fresh and unprecedent note which I vainly look for Assamese poetry of to-day.

Sd/- L. N. Bezbarua

For illustration three extracts are given below :—

1. Unmana

I know not who calls me today
To wander along with the clouds,
I know not who sings this lonely song
That overflows the air.

Nor can I make out whose writing it is,
Blazing in the stars,
Scarce can I tell why my heart
Is caught in its lure.

I shall simply fly today, with the clouds,
Tearing the blue heavens—
East or west, to every side
In the trail of the flute's melody.

১. উন্মনা

আজি না জানো কোনে মাতিছে মোক
মেঘৰ লগত যাবলই,
আজি নুবুজোঁ কোনে গাইছে গান
বতাহে বতাহে অকলই।

আজি নিচিনো কাৰ হাতৰ ৰেখা
তৰায় তৰায় জ্বলিছে,
আজি নুবুজোঁ তাত কিয়নো মোৰ
হৃদয় ইমান মজিছে।

আজি উড়িম মাথোন মেঘৰ লগত
নীলিম গগন বিদাৰি,
পূবে পছিমে যেনিবা পাওঁ
মধুৰ বাঁহীৰ সঁহাৰি।

2. In Hiding

Always in my very presence
  Behind the curtain of the great blue.
You are indulging in secret play (hide and seek)

Here are the Sun and the Moon
  The sleepless eyes as it were,
Thou art opening direct and oblique
  Oh thou art playing in disguise.

২ লুকাই লুকাই

এই তো সদায চকুৰ আগত—
  মহা নীলাম্বৰৰ আঁৰত
    লুকাই লুকাই খেলিছাঁ,
এই তো সদায সূৰ্য্য চন্দ্ৰ
  দুটি চকু বীত-তন্দ্ৰ
    পোনাই বেঁকাই খেলিছাঁ,
    আহা ! লুকাই লুকাই খেলিছাঁ .

3. The two men

There is room for two men in the house
                for two men ;
One plays hide and seek with dreams,
  The other groans in pain.
One smiles smelling the fragrance of flowers
  In the heart of a star,
The other submits to the fetters of his birth
  And weeping rolls on the earth.

৩. দুটি মানুহ
এটি ঘৰত
দুটি মাথোন
দুটি মানুহ ধৰে,—
এটি খেলে
লুকাই সপোন
এটি জ্বলি মৰে !
এটি হাঁহে
তৰাৰ মুখত
ফুলৰ গন্ধ টানি
এটি কান্দে
ধৰাৰ বুকুত
কুলৰ বন্ধ মানি।

RABINDRANATH AND ORIYA LITERATURE

GOPINATH MOHANTY

THIS is the seat of his Sadhana, this Santiniketan where the all-white Saraswati came to him again and again in all her bounty and glory and gave him vision and voice. He stood against the back-ground of this age in the beauty and truth of his stupendous creations — thousands of poems, novels and stories and plays and essays in abundance, works of art, and the new rhythm in music and dance which he invented with his deep learning and his contact with the learned ones all over the world. There are millions whom he inspired and into whose inner consciousness his message of peace and love, hope and courage, of harmony and broad humanism, sank so as to recreate them All this comes to mind in a whirlwind sweep.

Bengal and Orissa, existing side by side have historic ties of friendship made inseparable since the time of Sri Chaitanya who flourished in Utkala. Vaishnavism as in existed in Orissa then underwent a change and the Radha cult found full expression in the poems of the Vaishnava poets of Orissa that followed, Dinakrushna, Abhimanyu, Gopala Krushna, Kabi Surjya and the hundreds of other poets, whether belonging to the Chaitanyite order or not The love-play between the individual soul and the infinite which Rabindranath delineates in most of his poems was thus a theme well known to Orissa before but what was new was the way in which Rabindranath modified the theme Gone were the fixed local and physical elements of the theme, the Infinite one is present everywhere and the union can take place anywhere within or without. This is not a physical concept at all, it is spiritual. Although the lady-love, the soul, exhibits the same intensity of emotions, is expectant or pining or exultant as is revealed in the Vaishnava poems there is more of the thrill of mystery

in the new concept because the lover is unknown, invisible, infinite. The relation expresses itself in mental attitudes and it is important because this gives intellectuality to fancy which paved the way for the age of intellectual poems.

This concept of God existing within the human body in the midst of worldly experiences was depicted by the temple architects of Orissa in Konarak, Bhubaneswar and elsewhere in Orissa where outside on the temple walls there are pictures of man's worldly existence drawn in vivid detail and inside there is only God. This has also been the genre of the traditional poetry of Orissa, the integration of realism and romance, the body and the spirit and even in the poetic art of the great 10th century poet Sarala Dasa it is this spirit that is reflected. The poetry of Rabindranath sought another reality inside the apparently real.

A mystic note was also there in the poems of the Bajrajani Siddhas of the 7th Century Orissa who in their own way tried to fathom the ungettable, the one who dwelling inside the body was a realm of Sunya, no sound, no light no darkness, no star, no sun. It was the vision of a subtle space within space, enveloping every thing. This idea grew later into 'Śūnyabāda' and persisted in the poetry of the Sādhakas represented by symbols like A Kāra and Ma Kāra. It was there in the poet, Achyutananda in the description of the Brahma, in the verses of all the sages of the *Pinda Brahmānda* (that is the body as the universe) cult, in the Sudhāsāra Gitā and other poems with the peculiar mysticism that it gave rise to. It is heard in the poems of the Kondh saint Bhima Bhoi in the 18th Century, the lay poets rarely took up this theme. They dwelt on the Infinite but not as a formless one and a hundred and twenty years ago the sage Arata Das of the earth cult of Benupada sang

"Look O wise one, look through the eye of wisdom. The

Form is playing in front of the eye though it cannot be seen with the naked eye"

A combination of the Vaisnava approach and the Sunyavadi approach is seen only in the poems of Rabindranath, the mysterious unknown and the too well known one, deep in the heart.

Rabindranath is a great synthesis of the East and the West but it is the spirit of ancient Bharat which spoke through him. He derived much from the Vedas and Upanishads and also from the general spiritual and cultural heritage of India. In one part of his poetic self therefore there had existed commonness between him and others in other lands in India hundred of years before he was born I was struck by the similarity of words and vision between his song "Bhengechha Duar Esechha Jyotirmay" and a prayer to the Sun God which appears in the palm leaf M. S of the Sabhā Parva of the Oriya Mahābhārata written by Sāralā Dāsa in the 10th Century Rabindranath describes the rising sun as Timir Bidār and Sāralā Dāsa as Timira Bidārana both meaning the one who tears darkness into shreds, and both describe the Sun as Siva and as the Benefactor.

The lyric with God as the subjectmatter expressing the agony of the devotee to get his karunā and his love is of hoary ancestry in the literature of Orissa, it belongs to that class which is called a Janāna and there are innumerable such poems in the Oriya language They are moving, they are of deep spiritual significance, they are tearful, they express ecstasy and are found not merely in the works of the great writers but also in the composition of hundreds of lesser poets both Sādhakas and laymen. But in most of them God the Invisible One is associated with His miracles as depicted in orthodox religion and with the deeds which he did in his incarnation on earth

To think of God as not connected with such legendary miracles as in the Jaṇānas and at the same time not as Śunya Brahma but as the expression of creation in form and rhythm was rarely found in Oriya literature until the advent of the Brahmo Samaj in the 19th Century.

Fakirmohan the father of the Oriya novel and himself a prolific and renowned poet mentions in his autobiography that towards 1867 or 1868 he fell under the influence of the Brahma cult, obviously of the Naba Bidhan cult of Keshab Sen, so that he assisted in setting up a Brahmo Samaj at Balasore. That was a passing phase in his career but he translated the Upanishads into Oriya and the book was published in 1905. In his poem *The Soul Immortal* Fakirmohan writes :—

"Having read the vast book of the Universe
I have learnt only this much in my life
With each one of the innumerable worlds
flung into the sky
Am I connected"

and

"In this universe that is indestructible
Nor is the soul subject to death
The Universe shall exist, I will exist,
We will exist for all time
The paths of both of us run parallel".

This was a new note in Oriya poetry, man realising his great strength within himself because he is connected to the entire universe. And later in his Naivedya Rabindranath sang :

The waves of life which flew night and day in
every vein of my body
The same life rushes to conquer the entire universe.
The same life with rhythm that has unspeakable
beauty dances in the world.

The same life, silently in every pore of the
earth in millions of blades of grass, flows
with joy and expresses itself in leaves and flowers".

Fakirmohan was not influenced by Rabindranath but the source of his conviction was the lore of the Upanishads. But Fakirmohan did not dilate much on this theme and the concepts of the Invisible Infinite and the universe were more ardently expounded by Madhusudan Rao, the great spiritual poet of those days who was himself a Brahma.

Madhusudan Rao was reading in the Ravenshaw College at Cuttack when he was converted into the cult of the Sadharan Brahmo Samaj founded at Cuttack in about 1880. He came in contact with Maharshi Devendranath and later with Rabindranath, then a young poet, whom during his visit to Santinikeran Madhusudan highly appreciated He said that Rabindranath's poems were those of a Sadhaka. Though physical love often depicted in mediaeval Oriya poetry had been declaimed by Radhanath Ray and his group, Radhanath in his poems did not discard the theme of physical love, he described its passion and generally eschewed the physical details. But Madhusudan Rao who belonged to this school of the moderns of the 19th century true to his conviction and faith devoted himself exclusively to the spiritual His poems had a deep tone of spirituality. An austere purity, stark simplicity and spontaneity, a sense of peace and of being one with the Lord characterize his poems and his songs have permeated the country and are sung everywhere as psalms.

In his poem on 'Sounds' in the midst of the many sounds in this world of sorrow or of joy, delicate or harsh he strains his ears to catch the divine sound He says "But have you heard the voice of the Infinite,

That sound which surges through every pore
of the universe ?"

He derived his divine outlook from the knowledge of the Upanishads through his intimate contact with Brahmo philosophy. The difference between him and Rabindranath is quite plain. He did not conceive of his relation with the Infinite as the relation between a lady and her lover, and so the mystic love-play between the soul and the Infinite and the agony and the ecstasy resulting therefrom are not found in his poems. There is no trace of any influence of Rabindranath in his poem but with his deep spirituality marked by a complete surrender to the Infinite he appears to be closer in spirit to Rabindranath then all the others who followed.

It has been necessary to speak of these great precursors of Rabindranath, in thought, in the Oriya literature in order to locate his influence. Rabindranath is a versatile prodigy in all sections of literature but his prose works did not affect the Oriya prose-literature. His novels, stories, plays and essays cast no influence on Oriya writers. They are not even widely known in Orissa. It is only in poems that his influence can be studied but except his metre and rhythm which gave new models to lyric poets his influence was not much. Out of the large number of poets who followed since then, only about six or seven exhibit his influence in idea or expression and the influence was never absorbing nor lasting. In order to understand why it was so it is necessary to know the background in which his message came to Orissa, the tendencies that then ruled in the literature of Orissa, its traditional moods and the taste of the Oriya reader. Not many people in Orissa read Bengali poetry, but that was not the sole reason.

Rabindranath was awarded the Nobel Prize in 1913 and at once that turned the gaze of the world on this literary genius who had been able to win world recognition in a country that was in bondage. He was the champion of Indian nationalism

and spoke a new language, the language of universality and of high idealism. But by then the greatest work in poetry in Orissa had already been done in the great and immortal achievements of the masters in poetry, Radhanath, Madhusudan, Gangadhar, Fakirmohan followed by the great poet Nandakishore Bala The model left by them was still the grand model The Oriya poets were striving to preserve the purity and distinctiveness of the Oriya language and were sending out an impassioned appeal to the people to take pride in Orissa and her traditions, while at the same time as in the Kabyas Darabāra or Mahājātrā of Radhanath or in Bhārati Bhāvanā and several other poems of Gangadhar Meher they were preaching revolt against the alien rule and laying great stress on Indian unity.

This tendency received an added impetus when in 1903-4 Madhusudan Das, the great political leader of Orissa of those days, organised his Utkal Sammilani movement for the unification of Oriya speaking areas then lying completely dismembered. When the nationalist movement began and there arose its leader Utkalamani Gopabandhu Das, the celebrated Gandhian leader of Orissa, and Pandit Godavarish Mishra and Pandit Nilakantha Das who are great poets in the Oriya language They with their colleagues founded the Satyabadi National School and set up a new literary movement which had a profound effect on the country. While they preached Indian unity, revolt for liberation from the foreign yoke and rehabilitation of the age old sterling values of India in character conduct and thought they laid great emphasis on Orissa and her problems and inspired the people with patriotism for Orissa The songs of Godavaris Mishra 'Tunga Sikhari Chula' and 'Ranjita Asi Dhare' rang throughout Orissa and Gopabundhu Das who is regarded as a Gandhian saint and had all-India outlook wrote in his moving poem *The prisoner speaks* :

The sights that I have seen in Utkal with my own eyes
Have my dreams like frightening and hideous apparitions
Sturdy yeomen in thousands and farmers who once were
men of means
Now starve for food, for a square meal in the morning
or in the evening
Fighting races, once the flower of Utkal's army
Still bearing the military surnames of their caste
Paika the soldier, Malla the wrestler, and
Pradhan the army Major
Roam the streets carrying the beggar's bowl
The people have no strength to lift their stooping
trunks above the waist
And whatever they earn toiling from morn till night
Anointing their heads with the sweat from their faces
Is all robbed by the vultures, the village money-lender,
the rural police and the Zemindars".

This tendency reflected itself in two significant effects One was social consciousness in Oriya poetry which is practically the characteristic of the Oriya artistic point of view as is also reflected in the temple art, not the pure idealism shorn of its material flesh and blood nor the purely physical but a combination of both, the high universal ideal emerging out of man who has a local habitation. This has continued since the times of Sarala Dasa down to Sachi Routray. The other effect was pride for Orissa and a scorn for imitation. After the advent of Gandhism, Marxist ideas, and of late of Sarbodaya, the idea of universal brotherhood, first enthroned in the Jagannath cult hundreds of years ago but rarely realised in practice before, has been steadily growing with the years but at the time when Orissa looked at Tagore it was love for traditional Oriya literature and Oriya traditions that had ruled and that is one

reason why for all the high regard for his great genius his influence was not accepted by the large majority of writers for moulding their poems It is a great tribute to the genius of the great Rabindranath that in spite of it at all, the Matra Vritti Chhanda as modified by him and the structure of his poems were followed by the poets of Orissa in preference to the Akshara Vritti Chhanda traditionally followed in Oriya poetry and in preference to the difficult but delicous Chhanda rhymes that had been the speciality of Oriya poetry since the 15th Century

Another factor that has counted is the taste of the large masses of the reading public who live in the villages and are not English educated. The traditional literature of Orissa is preserved and fostered by the Pālākāis who for hundreds of years have made the interpretation of secrets of meaning, Rasas and Alankaras and all the characteristic beauty of mediaeval Kavyas before the peasants and labourers in the villages their profession This popular taste rejected all that was not 'into the manner born'. This vast world remained shut up to external influences in literature for a very long time

This was the state of things when Rabindranath become well known to Orissa in 1920

Rabindranath had a Zamindari in Orissa at Pandua and some of his poems had been composed on his visits to his Zemindari. He was deeply moved when he saw the grandeur of the Lingaraj temple at Bhubaneswar and he has described his feelings. It occurs to me that his grand and serene poem *Naivedya* was inspired by the idea which this famous shrine embodies The poem starts with an address to Bhubaneswar whom elsewhere the great poet hails as Mahesha and Ananta, all attributes of Lord Shiva, and in this poem there are the familiar scenes of the temples, candles burning and then being put out, devotees going away and also the narrowness and bigotry of petty minds

who want to break up into bits the one boat on which millions depend for their voyage.

He had a house on the sea-shore at Puri, the Patharpuri where he used to stay at times and the sea often appears in his visions with its many moods, sometimes billowing and surging and sometimes the peaceful sea of peace symbolising eternal bliss.

Tagore's influence first became manifest in the poems of the nationalist poet and musician Laxmikanta Mohapatra. The poetic attitude of Tagore of the lady love waiting for her lover is reflected in his poems in his collection *Jiban Sangeeta* published in 1932, but composed much earlier The rhythm of Tagore is there too. His poetic self in the guise of a lady keeps the door of her heart open with the expectation that he would be coming, she hears his slow footfalls and starts shivering in excitement. This is as Tagore sang in "*Gitali* (57)"—

Tomār Duār Kholār Dhwani
Ai go Bāje Hridaya Mājhe

The music of this unknown lover bursts forth from her Vina. Tagore sang—

Bājāo Āmare Bājāo
Bājāle je Surey
Probhāta Ālorey
Sei Surey Morey Bājāo.

Sometimes she hears some one calling from across the river. There are expressions like "ANANDA GHANA" or

"Nikhila Bisśwa Nandita Kari Jāgichi Nikhila Chhanda
Gagana Bhubana Spandita Kari Bahuchi Malaya Spanda".

Laxmi Kanta Mohapatra is a famous poet by his own right and he imbibed ideas from Tagore to cloak them with his poetic genius. His music, his songs for national independence and in other poems his irony remain for ever cherished treasures in Oriya literature. He was deeply meditative and

had a subtle aesthetic sense and so he could imbibe which the accredited followers could not.

An effort to write poems following the footsteps of Tagore was started by a group of college students in the early 1920. Anada Sankar Ray, who became famous later as a Bengali novelist, Baikuntha Nath Patnaik and Kalindi Charan Panigrahi who flowered as poets, Harihar Mohapatra and Sarat Chandra Mukherjee were the prominent members of the group They called their association "The nonsense club". The collection of their poems called *Sabuja Kabita* was published in 1931 Before that their articles were being published in the monthly literary magazine "*Utkal Sahitya*". The word "Sabuj" is a Bengali word meaning "Green the corresponding Oriya word being "Sagua". Rabindranath used to contribute articles to a magazine called Sabuj Patra. He has that famous song in *Balaka*—"Ore Nabin, Ore Amar Kancha Ore Sabuj Ore Abujh etc."

In his poem "Pralaya Prerana" Annada Sankar Ray expressed—

"Spark of fire, spark of fire, light a burning
flame in my body, that is a lamp
I will burn the blind mist of numbness with
heat intense
Make me mad with the wine of energy
My entire body yearns for energy.
Give me the wine of life to drink and make me mad".

This can be well compared with the 18th poem in "*Gitali*"

"Aguner Paras Mani Chhoaon Prane
E Jiban Punya Karo Dahan Dane"

In his poem regarding "Golden Angel" he wrote—

"Jhara Jhara Jhare Bari Barasara Timire
Jhana Jhana Manjira Sana Sana Samire".

In that poem Annada Sankar sings—

"I am the storm, I shall rage
Across continents, across the age
I am the fire, I will burn
The lifeless, the aged without hesitation".

The poems of Annada Sankar were a promise never to be fulfilled as he bade adiew to Oriya literature.

Sarat Mukherjee and Harihar Mohapatra rarely wrote poems outside the Sabuja collection.

Kalindi Charan did not continue for long as a poet. He wrote a few poems and then turned to novels, short stories and essays. As a poet he is a seeker of truth and beauty and his poems are suffused with a delicate charm and with a keen intellectuality, but he became famous as the writer of the novel "*Matira Mamsa*" and practically left writing poetry. In his poem on the Puri temple he announced—

"I do not seek the path to salvation by
eschewing human sympathy"

This is the echo of that famous line of Tagore in which he says—

"Bairagya Sadhane Mukti Se Nahe Amar".

In his poem "The Red Pain" he writes—

"The rosy heart of someone had burst and fallen,
The three worlds become devastated with the touch
of that pain
That red pain floats in the air
And that red tune fills the sky
That red pain has raised a cry of despair in my soul
Its red kiss is there on my entire body".

The influence of the 8th stanza of "*Urbasi*" is plainly perceptible in this poem. The continuous deep spiritual tone of Tagore's poems is lacking in these poems of the Sabuja group. With Tagore that came from the innate and real personality

of the poet, in them it was a passing poetic mood and often absent In his poem on the Puri temple where the lines have been arranged like temple upturned, Kalindi Charan has called Jagannath only a lifeless idol made of wood and stone. He declares that he respects the memory of the pilgrims who came to that spot and of the King who built the temple and desired that his name should not be mentioned.

The only poet of the Sabuja group who has continued as a poet is Baikunthanath Patnaik. Like Rabindranath he sings—

"Daily I sit and shed tears for your parting
And make garlands with my tears
These are the last offerings of my life
I sometimes play on my lyre.
So you may hear the music and make it your own".

He addresses God as his sweet-heart and sings—

"You are the Mystery, the Truth, the Shadow,
The poet prides himself in this world
That you are his lover".

In his famous poem on the last journey he sings—

"O my beloved
You have filled the cup of my life
In many ways
Shall I now say
You gave me nothing
Darling of my life,
You have taken away my mistakes
May my boat sail away into your sea".

The influence of Tagore is sometimes perceptible in the word music, such as —

"Sunya Mora Ghara Ajire Khara Tara
Timira Hane Sara Sajani
Ki Katha Nirabata Kahi Jala Byatha
Na Dise Dura Priya Sajani"

Baikunthanath outgrew the stage of the adolescent who fired with devotion for his hero tries to toe his line. While in his earlier days not only ideas but also words like "*Krandasi*" and the characteristic expressions of Rabindranath used to be found here and there in his poems more and more of originality appeared subsequently in his poems and he developed more of social consciousness, raised his voice against injustice oppression and other social evils and gave more attention to the common man and to his problems.

Outside the Sabuja group another popular poet to be influenced by Rabindranath was the famous lady writer the late Kuntala Kumari Sabat. She wrote her poems in and around 1926 and her books "*Raghu Arakhita*", "*Anjali*", "*Archana*" and "*Sphulinga*" have a wide appeal. In her many novels she pleaded for social reforms exposing the tragic conditions in which the women of Orissa lived in their homes in the villages. In her poems she inspired the nation with the burning breath of nationalism. She adopted the metre and the structure of the poems of Rabindranath to some extent and her devotional poems sometimes reflected the poetic moods of Rabindranath. In her poem "*Nirmakhi*" the neglected one she addresses the Infinite lover and sings —

"Today with my tears I have washed away
the pride of my heart
My prayer at your feet is
Remove the lament of frustration".

These lines echo Rabindranath. In her poem "*Mo Karam*" she sings —

"It is not my prayer unto you
To relieve me from eternal distress".

This is a typical idea of Rabindranath and may be compared with "Bipade More Rakshya Koro E Nahe Mor Prarthana", but unlike Rabindranath she does not pray to God in this

poem for giving her fortitude Her prayer is "Let work be my religion". This is due to the influence of Gandhism In her poem "Nara Narayana" she tells her beloved the Infinite —

> "I kept my door open and was awake all night because you would pass by my house The universe woke up for you. The fragrant breeze below, the birds sang your prayer, but no one knew by which path you passed You passed in the guise of a poor man filling your beggar's bowl".

This is another idea borrowed closely from Rabindranath, but Kuntala Kumari Sabat was more occupied with inspiring the people of Orissa and bringing home to them the sense of their downfall. There was music in her lines and rich poetical content. But she died young

The direct influence of Rabindranath on Oriya literature ceased with the short lived Sabuja group Manasing, a poet who sings of love, had his own characteristic development At a few places, there are faint echoes of Rabindranath in his poem and he also wrote some Giti Natyas like "*Sadhava Jhia*" & etc In his poem "*Subha Drusti*" in "*Hema Puspa*" where the princess Ulupi taking her bath in the Pampa Sarobara with her friends first sees Arjuna, he describes that when the water was struck softly by the hands of the sporting ladies which he compares with the stalks of lotus flowers a soft hubbub "Kallola" rose along with the sounds of laughter of the sporting ladies. This can be compared with a similar picture drawn by Rabindranath in his poem "Samanya Kshati" where there are also the words "Kallola and Mrinala Bhuja" in close succession in order to convey the same image Mansing's poem "Biswa Rupa" appears to be an amplification of Tagore's line "Bairagya Sadhane Mukti Se Nahen Amar" Like Rabindranath his lover exclaims —

"I can leave all pride but not my pride in you". Elsewhere in his prolific productions the reflection of Tagore appears no more.

He is deeply read in English literature and has close familiarity with Sanskrit, the sources which also had their influence on Rabindranath. His poetry is characterised by a passionate intensity, delicate shades of colour, subtlety, suggestiveness and deep serenity and a sense of repose. His treatment of love developed from the physical and the sensuous to the spiritual. In his poem "the pole star" he sings with a deep pathos

"When the Pole Star is not seen
How shall I ply my boat in the ocean
of the world ?
When my boat raised the sail and left
the shore
The time was lit by the golden rays of the sun
I sang merrily while my boat sailed away
And where is the Pole Star now ?

And later—

"Up above the clouds rumble again and again
The night is deep and proudly the storm roars
O'my creator, tell me whither shall I go
The Pole Star is not seen"
"A strange voyage this in the ocean
When death ever stalks ahead of life
The traveller escapes death
By looking at the Pole Star
That star is not seen today".

In the 6th stanza in his poem "God Asleep" this poetic attitude has become prominent.

"The divine child goes to find his pleasures
in hell.
And where God are you asleep ?

Far have I come away along the path
And your temple is no more visible
I am a dweller of the kingdom of light
And now I am steeped in darkness
Shut up on all sides
O, set me free O ".

In his later poems he showed two tendencies, one was to use poetry for expressing common thoughts and feelings with a touch of realism as in his Kavya Kamalayana and the other was to express deep and serious thoughts unoccupied with common realistic life on earth as is found in his collections of Sonnets, the later poems

A powerful poet of these days is Radha Mohan Gadnaik. There is not even a shade of reflection of the language or poetic attitude of Rabindranath in his poems. His love is impassionate and restless and it is not the love of a lover for his sweet-heart. It is the love of the poet for all humanity His poem on the monsoon is characteristic of his sense of burning sympathy for suffering humanity and his mission in poetry. Here the monsoon says that he was passing an idle homely life of love, but was moved by the sufferings inflicted on the world by the scorching summer and then he came rushing to relieve distress He sings—

"Some one's burning breath
The agony of a heart
Suddenly struck my body"

He says—

"I am not the meek nor graceful nor slow moving
I am ferocious and eager and on the march
I have lifted up torrents from the sea's bosom
And driven the flying clouds from the far horizon
I have given my life for the welfare of sick souls
I am the evil day

On creation's platform
Here I have brought the evil day".

This is the tone that gathers more power in the voice of the powerful poet Godavaris Mohapatra. His poem on the Flood is tremulous with feeling for the sufferers and contains trenchant satire against those who paying a visit to the flood stricken areas do not like to get down into the mud He weaves his powerful poems suffused with tearful sympathy round the common neglected man in the villages. His style has the purity of the style of Gopabandhu Das who often appears in his poems and he does not show any influence of Rabindranath except at times in metre.

The break from the lyrical tradition further continued in the poems of Sachi Routroy. This poet translated Tagore's "*Barsa Mangal*" in his adolescence. He has deep intimacy with the literature of Tagore and at one time he obtained a message from the great poet wishing success for his efforts to establish relations between Orissa and Bengal. He had a multiple and complex development and represented fusion of many attitudes, constant experimenting, change and at the same time a keen intellect and a powerful creative genius. At one time during his poetic growth he took up significant expressions from Tagore like "Jhara Bakuler Krandan," "Ghara Ghada Ei Pathara Kabita" "Matira Malina Buke", "Ashu Sikta Sitala Akase", "Mouna Dirghe Swasa", and lines like "He Mora Niraparadha Desh." which line is modelled Tagore's He Mora Durbhaga Desh." This came in a particular phase in his poetic growth after he had already become famous as a writer of charming poems depicting life in the villages in all its simplicity, love, beauty, sufferings and agony. In this phase he wrote—

"This love this creation which bears my life's signature
Lies far behind like a torn letter of the past

The ahead beckons to me again and again
I must have to go, my path flows on and on to afar
I have no sorrow for whatever is left behind
The glory of the journey awakes in my mind".

There is a similar poetic attitude in the last song of Tagore's *Seser Kabita* and in his good bye to the old year in *Balaka*.

Under the influence of Marxism and in several impassioned poems he had sung of revolution That stage passed and then came his poems expressing sympathy with the down-trodden and exhibiting his natural genius as he had shown in the *Boatman Boy* and in his poem on a peasant leaving the village for the tea gardens in Assam with his wife and child In the subsequent stage when he got back to his natural consistency of poetic personality he turned to the free verse of poignant feelings and to the startlingly new bewildered mental picture of the post-war world, his words became fewer intense, concrete and burning with bare simplicity. And thus Sachi Routroy founded a school of poetry in the Oriya literature which is growing. His break from romantic lyrics is evidenced in his famous poem *Pratima Nayak* in which he sings—

"A faded moon in the sky
white like soap lather
It has made a compromise between life and darkness
In the far distance, in the factory, the chimney coughs
The mail train of eight P. M. crosses the river
of paddy fields that goes like a ladder
I have read in poems that at this hour
The Chakrabaka bird weeps
And suddenly after many years, I met Pratima Nayak

* * *

A Khaki smile on her face, the beckoning of
the night in her eyes

Fast rushing forest on either side
The stream of stars in flight
Alas : Let Pratima Nayak smile
She has no anchal around her
I saw her Khaki uniform."

Lyrical poetry found new avenues in the poems of another poet Ananta Patnaik, who at one time was influenced by Marxism. His poems do not evince influence of the language or idea of Rabindranath. Here there is rich freshness, melody and colour in the language collected from the common speech and selected with care and used with new technique so as to become more suggestive and striking. Selected common words, words picked from daily work in the home become symbols. There is a natural spontaneity and a living pulsation. In concepts there is more intellectuality, in feelings there is wide sympathy for the common man. He sings of hope and courage and of universal brotherhood of man.

There are several poets in Orissa today and some of them have already become important. It is not easy to do justice to their art in such a brief review. But an important futuristic tendency is represented in the poems of the ultra-moderns whose aim is to free poetry from sentimentality and from the accepted moods of romanticism. Poets of this group are discriminating intellectuals fired with a passionate intensity. They have been influenced by T. S. Eliot, Beaudelaire and the Metaphysical poets of 17th century England. There is the ring of sincerity in their poems but there is also a flashing irony that chaffs at sentimentality and tries to peel off layers and layers of romantic associations to reveal something truer and more lasting within man's consciousness. The poets Guru Prasad Mahanty and Bhanuji Rao whose poems have appeared in a single volume Nutan Kabita are the precursors of this movement. Many

rising poets of the younger generation like Ramakanta Rath write such poems.

It cannot be predicted what course Oriya poetry will take in future. Even in this modern age of free verse and T. S. Eliot there are poets who write in the form of the pre-modern poets like Bhanja for whom a deeper appreciation is growing in Orissa since the Kalinga Bharati movement was started by the late Bichhanda Charan Patnaik There are many poets of many attitudes in between these two ranges

The influence of Rabindranath on Oriya literature thus came and went in the space of barely 10 years, which is nothing in the history of a more than a thousand years of Oriya poetry. It did not affect more the half a dozen active poets and except one or two even others did not continue that line But Rabindranath has become an immortal classic and has mixed in the blood stream of every Indian like Kalidasa, shaping thoughts and emotions at the fountain head, in the subconscious and in that sense it can hardly be said that he is not there in consciousness of any writer in India who has read his poems. He is an ocean of poetical feeling and emotions. He can be understood only with deep meditation and through life lived and experienced.

He says of his songs as—

"My songs
They are a crowd of mosses
That never made themselves immobile
at the place where they were born
They have no roots but only flowers
And only leaves
They take joy from light and dance on waves

He is the poet eternal who belongs to all ages and to all humanity, the guide, the seer, the immortal

RABINDRANATH AND ORIYA LITERATURE

KALINDI CHARAN PANIGRAHI

PRINCE Dwarakanath, the grand-father of the poet, had owned some landed estate in Orissa. Maharshi Devendranath and his illustrious sons and nephews had visited it several times. Rabindranath himself was a regular visitor in the prime of his life and the interesting descriptions of his journey to Pandua estate in 1891-92 are found in *Chhinna Patra* (Torn leaves).

Apart from the personal connections, Orissa is not only in the close neighbourhood of Bengal from the geographical stand-point but the manners, customs, food and habits of the Oriyas and Bengalis are almost the same. It goes without saying also that Oriya and Bengali are two sister languages sprung up from a common stock. Having a common cultural background a strong emotional integration has been established between the two peoples even before Chaitanya came to spend the last part of his life in Puri. For the Oriya Mahabharata of Sarala Das of the 15th century A. D. was translated into Bengali as observed, by the late Bijoy Chandra Mazumdar. The close proximity of the two peoples has thus brought their literatures nearer to each other for centuries.

It is no wonder, therefore, that long before the fame of Rabindranath had spread far and wide and even before he became a Nobel laureate, the synthetic ideals of Brahmoism — the assimilation of all that is best in the East and the West of which he was the chief exponent in literature — had already made some headway in Orissa. Madhusudan Rao, one of the famous trio who laid the foundation of modern Oriya literature, died on December 28, 1912, at the age of sixty, just before Rabindranath was awarded the Nobel Prize. He had become a convert to the neo-Hinduism that appeared in the form of Brahmoism like the neo-Vaisnavism propagated by Chaitanya

in the sixteenth century Having direct contact with the spiritual leaders of the Brahmo-movement Madhusudan had established matrimonial relationship of his sons and daughters with the rich and cultured families of Bengali Brahmos. Senior in age to Rabindranath he may be called the first and the foremost Oriya poet to be inspired by the spirit of his times and to write most of his poems on nature and life which gave absolutely a new turn to Oriya lyrics and poems both in respect of the form and the content.

He was endowed with a rare creative genius and as a preacher of the Brahmo Samaj he wrote a number of devotional songs known as *Brahma Sangeet* which can be well compared with those of Rabindranath. Obviously these songs of prayer made a departure from the traditional Bhajans of gods and goddesses and sought the direct union of the individual with the universal soul, the created with the creator.

With the sensibility of supreme piety and sublime thoughts of moral values propounded by the Upanishads the *Brahma Sangeeta* were couched in chaste and simple language. Another of his new experiments was the sonnet hitherto unknown in Oriya literature, a collection of which was named *Basanta Gatha*. Each sonnet is the specimen of a peace of highly finished art. Accurate in technique they embrace a variety of subjects including men and affairs of his time A sonnet was composed on the death of Radhanath, his contemporary and Guru, and another was addressed to his motherland Utkal which concludes with the following lines —

"Kotiye Santana Ma Go Dhariachhu Kole
Uotiye Manusya Kintu Na Dekhili Dole"

(You have held in your lap a crore of songs Oh Mother ;
But I could not find a man among them through my eyes)

We may find a resemblance also in Rabindranath's poem addressed to Banga Janani (Mother Bengal)

swept off his feet. He may be right or wrong in his analysis. But it is apparent that the writers of the period were cautious about—imitations at the secrifice of originality, were so because of the fact that the two languages being very much akin to each other, interpolation is too easy, unless one becomes sufficiently concious and guarded against it.

One thing is certain however that the poets and writers of of modern Orissa being drawn from the middle and the lower middle class, the pure and abstract romanticism and mysticism of Rabindranath was incomprehensible to them. Consequently, even in spite of the influence of neo-Vaisnavism on Oriya literature since 16th century after advent of Chaitanya, Oriya literature clings more or less to its own form of expression and to the traditional robust realism. It was in the early part of the present century that Nilakantha, Godavarish and Padmacharan to some extent broke away from the traditional metrical form as successful lyricists turned their eyes to the glorious heritage of the history of Orissa, the nook and corner of the thatched huts and the ruins of the temples to build up songs of love and patriotism.

As observed by Sri Ananta Patnaik, a well-known poet and critic of the present age—"It is worthwhile mentioning also that Oriyas were the last in India to get a glimpse of Western education as they were the last in history to be subjugated by the British. In consequence they had clung to their age-old form and content of literature and the rejuvination of their spirit was yet to come. But it came, when in the early twenties, along with the national awakening, a group of Oriya poets and litterateurs threw open all the doors to the western wind. The path of these writers was prepared and paved by their forerunners and their appearance was a historical necessity in Orissa as Rabindranath himself was a historical necessity in the renaissance of Indian literature. With a

promise to revolutionise the cultural and literary vision which had suffered from a stalemate and frustration owing to the then general political turmoil and struggle, they fearlessly welcomed themselves to the new romance of life duply thrilled by Rabindranath. They had to face and they are still facing terrible criticism from the orthodox and reactionary forces who raised and are still raising a hue and cry that they had fallen under "the spell of Rabindranath". Sri Patnaik continues, "they were experimenting on new modes of writing certainly inspired by Rabindranath and so also by Shelly, Keats, Tennyson, Wordsworth and other continental writers. They were young collegians then who appeared in between the two great wars and named themselves as members of a club of their own making which they called the nonsense Club. They started with a manuscript magazine and afterwards formed the modern school of writers known as the Sabuja Group when they brought out a monthly magazine 'Jugabeena' devoted purely to stories, poems and literary criticisms of modern writers. The first Editor of 'Jugabeena' was Sri Harihar Mohapatra. It is they who eschewed the rhetorical excitement in poetry, said good-bye to the ornate and the verbose and brought in freshness, thrills and throbbing expressions of pathos, movement, gaity and glamour to Oriya poetry. Yet there was an attempt, something of a planned and calculated nature, to impede their progress by raising slogans against them that they were camp followers of Rabindranath. But surprisingly enough those who are loud in disclaming the "Greens" are themselves glaringly guilty of imitating and even adopting exact lines from Rabindranath.' They appeared to a great extent as amaturish Oriya versions of Rabindranath for they were more enamoured with the surface rather than his profound mysticism and symbolism. Even today, the critic remarks, they have not been able to shake

off the borrowed feather though the leading poets of the Sabuja Group have carved a distinct path for themselves."

Annadasankar Ray, the king-pin in the organisation of the "Greens" gave up Oriya language as a medium of his writing and took to Bengali. But the indelible mark he left on Oriya literature at the begining of his imaginative pursuits, is yet to be erased. For he is still remembered with love and admiration by the youth of Utkal. The force and flare of Baikunthanath is still unabated as he maintains the mysticism and symbolism of the master—though not in form but in spirit. The influence of Tagore is also perceptible in the poems of Mansinha, Satchidanand Routray, Godavarish Mahapatra Rashamohan Garnaik and Ananta Patnaik, the well-known lyricists of the later group of writers.

As regards prose, Rabindranath's well refined and genteel style is traceable in one prose writer—Biswanath Kar, the celebrated Editor of the now defunct monthly *Utkal Sahitya*. It was this journal which had hailed the Sabuja Group of writers into its bosom as they filled its pages with their poems, short stories, essays and criticism and also with a composite novel named *Basanti*, written by nine writers and serialised from month to month. Then it appeared in a book form as the first publication after the formation of the Sabuja Samiti. The Sabuj Samiti created a sensation inviting to its fold both the older and later generation of writers. Biswanath was regarded as the master of Oriya prose. He had embraced Brahmoism and not only succeeded Madhusudan Rao as a Brahmo preacher but was considered also as a preceptor and teacher of literature. His forceful but analytical expression in terse and elegent prose in a language at once striking and restrained with a Sanskritised from is inimitable. He was however a talent which could assimilate so thoroughly that it is impossible to find him, failing to be

original anywhere. The spiritual leader of the 'Greens', it is Biswanath Kar of revered memory who initiated the group practically by publishing in 1931 the first collection of poems named *Sabuja Kabita* containing selected poems of Annada Sankar Ray, Harihar Mohapatra, Baikunthanath Patnaik, Sarat Chandra Mukherjee and the present writer who also edited the book. The book was named by Annada Sankar and on it the 'Sabuja Samiti' was built up through the genuine efforts of Sarat Chandra Mukherjee.

It would be far-fetched, though somewhat true, that Girija Sankar Ray, Harischandra Baral, the latter being a member of the Sabuja Group, and one or two more prose writers had picked up the flare of Rabindranath. But it was due to Fakirmohan Senapati, Gopal Chandra Praharaj, Godavarish Misra, Nilakantha Das, Gopabandhu Das and others that Oriya prose stood independent of Rabindranath's style. The prose writers of the Sabuja Group had also little to do with Rabindranath. Similar was the case with novels and short stories Novels that were written in Sabuja days did not bear any stamp of Rabindranath. *Matir Manisha* (which has been translated into Bengali) and *Basanti* were realistic, psychological narratives and did not carry any thing of Rabindranath's Neither in the delineation of character, nor in building up the plots of the stories was there any resemblance to Tagore. But Tagore's influence can be traced in some of the short stories of the period and also literary essays and criticisms.

Oriya dramas also have never been influenced by Rabindranath except only some musical sketches and some literary plays such as — *Mukti Pathe* by Baikunthanath, *Pujarini* and *Konarka Jagaran* by Mayadhar Mansinha are the products of inspiration drawn from Tagore.

It is again somewhat curious to note that not a single book of Rabindranath has been translated into Oriya before inde-

pendence, though some of his poems had been passed in the names of unknown writers. It is only after a decade of independence and on the occasion of his birth centenary that Rabindranath has begun to be translated into Oriya, and started to capture and inspire the new masses of Orissa.

RABINDRANATH AND KASHMIRI LITERATURE

J. L. Kaul

If we do not mince matters, we should accept the plain fact that the influence of Rabindranath Tagore on the Indian literatures (other than Bengali, of course) has not been as considerable as it should have been; and that, in the circumstances, it could not be otherwise. I may indeed go further. Broadly speaking, while his influence on the inner periphery of the neighbouring literatures, Assamese, Oriya, Hindi and Urdu has not been considerable; it has been (again, only broadly speaking) meagre, that is, wanting in fullness, on the literatures of the middle periphery *vis-a-vis* Bengali, namely, Telegu, Marathi, Gujarati and Punjabi, and slight and scanty on the literatures of the outer periphery, Tamil, Kannada, Malayalam, Sindhi and Kashmiri, in some respects, the farthest of them all. This is not surprising. We have had till now little or no literary inter-communication because the very conditions making for such inter-communication have been wanting in our country. Perhaps, it may with justification be said that, the good work of Sahitya Akademi, State academies, and other associations notwithstanding, we are not even now doing all that needs being done in this behalf. We still know little of our eminent writers, of Ghalibs and Premchands, Bharatis and Vallathols, of our literatures. I wonder, therefore, if we should have known of Tagore had his fame as a Nobel Laureate not burst upon the view throughout the country.

And so it came to pass that when Rabindranath Tagore visited Kashmir in October 1915, his fame had already preceded him. Some of us were freshmen then, but we remember quite vividly his visit to the Government Sri Pratap College Srinagar. Here, at our request, he kindly recited for us two *Gitanjali* poems, beginning—

"The night darkened. Our day's work had been done......"

and "Have you not heard his silent steps ?
He comes, comes, ever comes..........."

in his rich sonorous voice which still rings in our ears. There was also a small non-official celebration of his visit in the city, in the house of the late Pandit Anand Kaul Bamzai, then President of the Municipality, situated on the left bank of the Jhelum below the (then) Fourth Bridge. Here he listened to several poems written in his honour, and he seemed to like them for their music and rhythm though, he archly remarked, not for their theme. I mention this little incident because his visit had a tremendous impact on some of us, albeit not very consciously registered. It seemed to impress upon the English educated young men, few and far between in those days (we produced our first batch of four graduates as late as 1911), the need of discovering songs and poems of their own neglected mother-tongue. And, when in 1928, Devendra Satyarthi, who had come to Kashmir a year before to collect our folk-songs, told the promising poet *Ghulam Ahmad Mahjoor* that the poet had very much appreciated the melodious lilt of his poem, *tso'lhamaa tsu' roshe roshe Poshemati Jaanaano,* it heartened Mahjoor and confirmed him in his decision finally and without regret to discard writing indifferent verse in Urdu and take to writing only in Kashmiri, with the result that he left it richer than he found it. It may also be of interest to know that during his stay, Tagore lived in a houseboat at Munshibagh where the Jhelum has its longest loop and the view is open and prospect wide. The scene seems to have impressed him vividly enough to give us the noble opening imagery of the poem *Balaakaa*—

एन्ध्यारागे-झिलिमिलि झिलमेर स्रोतखानि बांका
आंधारे मलिन हल, येन खापे ढाका

बांका तलोयार,
दिनेर भांटार शेषे रात्रिर जोयार
एल तार भेसे-आसा ताराफुले निये कालो जले,
अन्धकार गिरितटतले
देओदार-तरु सारे सारे,
मने हल, सृष्टि येन स्वप्ने चाय कथा कहिवारे,
बलिते ना पारे स्पष्ट करि—
अव्यक्त ध्वनिर पुन्ज अन्धकारे उठिछे गुमरि ॥

(The Jhelum's curving stream, glittering in the evening glow, pales with the dark, like a curving scimitar hidden in its sheath. On the day's ebb the tides of night come, bringing their star—flowers drifting on the black water. Below the dark mountains the ranks of Deodars stand I feel as if creation wished to speak in its dream, but cannot find clear utterance, only a confusion of wordless sounds murmuring and soughing in the darkness[1]).

Here he also wrote some other poems printed in the *Balaakaa* volume of poems (1916) which all discerning critics are agreed upon as being among the maturest poems Tagore has written.

This is what Tagore's personal impact did for Kashmiri and how Kashmir made a token repayment to Bengali of the debt Kashmiri owed to Bengal's eminent poet But we do not discern any literary influence of him till *Zinda Kaul* chose to write in Kashmiri rather late in life. In his *Sumran*, a Sahitya Akademi Award winner for poetry, 1956, we have a poem entitled *Karu'naavi Taarakh Naa Apor* (Ferryman, will you not take us across ?) where we have the familiar Tagore river and boatman imagery employed for a theme similar to that of Tagore's *Praarthanaa* (A Prayer).[2]

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1 Translated by Edward Thompson.

2 Where the mind is without fear (*Gitanjali*, 35)

Where all have a living faith in God—
One, loving Father, Lord of all—
Where love, service and charity
is the simple and supreme rule of life ;
where lands are vast and all have room to live ;
where food and fruit and milk abundant
and all the good things of life, are shared by all ;
where all have work to do and none are idle,
and those who work have time for play
and study song and fun ;
where dwellings are clean and gardens lovely ;
where disease and ugliness and evil ways of life
do not stunt and warp the growth of men ;
where none suffer from want and fear—
To that City Beautiful,
Ferryman, lead me and my countrymen :

This influence may be traced also in his eponymous poem *Sumran* and also in *Naatayaa'ree* where God is the eternal lover and needs man as man needs God.

We may turn away from Him,
but will He let us go ?

Tagore's influence may also be said to have permeated in a subtle way into ths fine symbolism of the Opera plays by Dina Nath Nadim and Noor Mohammad Roshan, Bombur Ye'mbu'-rzal and also in *Heemal ta Naa'gyraay* where an ancient local legend becomes alive and rich with meaning. Dina Nath Nadim has translated most of the *Gitanjali* poems and his translation has caught not only the music but also the deep yearning spirit of the original poems ; one or two others have translated, less successfully, a few poems from *the Crescent Moon* and *the Gardener*. There have also been quite good translations of a few Tagore plays, *Red Oleanders* and *Sacrifice* by Noor Mahammad Roshan, *Dak Ghar* and *Raja O Ram* by Amin Kamil,

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All this notwithstanding, it remains true that it is the *Gitanjali* mainly that first came to our hands in English and Urdu translations ; and that it is this that set the vogue for the prose-poem in Indian literatures. Tagore's short stories, generally excellent in their genre, came to us much later, when other influences, of Chekov and Maupausant and others from Europe, had their full impact ; and it is regretted that we still know little of his valuable essays in literary criticism like *Sahitya* and *Sahityer pathe*.

Moreover, Tagore's influence had little time to permeate all round, for soon the thirties of the century were upon us, when we were, I believe everywhere in India, somewhat overwhelmed by the new trends of European art and literature. The temper and mood of the times had changed, and Tagore's influence remained incomplete This has been unfair to Tagore and not quite fortunate for our literatures, for we cultivated a one-sided and false view of his work and art ; and he came to be regarded as a poet of "vague musings" and "twilight melodies" (the phrases are Tagore's). Had we known then what we know now, I daresay that the influence of Tagore should have been much greater not only on Kashmiri but also on all the other Indian literatures. Till the last year we did not have the excellent Sahitya Akademi publication, *Ekottarashatti* (in devanagari transliteration) to give us a fuller idea of the variety and vitality, of the sustained power of thought, and of the fusion of thought and passion, in quite a few of his poems. We did not, for instance, know Tagore as the writer of *Vaishaakh*—

Where all have a living faith in God—
One, loving Father, Lord of all—
Where love, service and charity
is the simple and supreme rule of life ;
where lands are vast and all have room to live ;
where food and fruit and milk abundant
and all the good things of life, are shared by all ;
where all have work to do and none are idle,
and those who work have time for play
and study song and fun ;
where dwellings are clean and gardens lovely ;
where disease and ugliness and evil ways of life
do not stunt and warp the growth of men ;
where none suffer from want and fear—
To that City Beautiful,
Ferryman, lead me and my countrymen :

This influence may be traced also in his eponymous poem *Sumran* and also in *Naatayaa'ree* where God is the eternal lover and needs man as man needs God.

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हे भैरव, हे रुद्र वैशाख,
धूलाय धूसर रूक्ष उड्डीन जटाजाल,

or of *Sindhu Tarang*[3] (which I miss in *Ekottarashatti*)—

दोले रे प्रलय दोले अकुल समुद्र-कोले
उत्सव भीषण—
तरणी धरिया झांके—राक्षसी झटिका हांके
"दाओ, दाओ, दाओ,"
सिन्धु फेनोच्छल छले कोटि ऊर्ध्वकरे बले
"दाओ, दाओ, दाओ,"
नाइ तुमि भगवान नाइ दया, नाइ प्राण
जडेर विलास।—
प्राणहीन ए मत्तता न जाने परेर व्यथा
न जाने आपन।

or *Urvasi*

सुरसभातले यबे नृत्य कर पलके उल्लसि
हे विलोल हिल्लोल उर्वशी।

or *Vasundharaa*, *Karna Kunti Samvaad*, *Chhavi*, *Shahjahan*, *Balaaka Tapobhang*, *Yete Naahi Diba* and *Ahallarprati* and many others.

Surely, we have not in them what Hafiz Jullundari calls "a witchery of Bengal, of soft music and song, of flowers and fragrance, bringing down sleep and self-forgetfulness."[4]

In prose translation we have inevitably an impression of sameness and monotony but, looking through the Akademi books, we cannot miss the variety of theme and form and Tagore's skill as a craftsman of word and verse. Not only as a social reformer and educationist but also as poet and playwright and short story writer and, of course, as painter, Tagore in his

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3 Cp. *Maanasi* volume of poems.
4 Cp. *Teen Mugaanne* in *Soz-u Saaz* by Hafiz Jullundari

time was an anti-traditionalist rebel in Bengali and Indian literature generally; and he broke much new ground. We find in him a love of ordinary children rare in Indian literatures; a more detailed observation of the sights and sounds and smells of the earth than has been usual with us; and a recognition given to the "lowliest and lost", the *Pashchim majur* cutting earth and the little Didi[5] scouring and scrubbing pots and pans. Before he did this, they were generally speaking, the untouchables of our literatures and were there, if at all, only incidentally and not in their own right.

It may seem presumptuous and profitless to say all this now but I plead that it is neither. The purpose of these centenary celebrations is not merely to register dead facts and the influence that was but to re-discover and re-assess this many-sided genius and to find out what there is in him which still has value for us and our literatures I believe that since, firstly, the reaction of the thirties is not now as doctrinaire and blatant as it was and the dis-illusionment of the time not quite as exultant; and secondly, since these celebrations will bring to light these and many more little known sides of his genius and personality, Tagore's influence has a better chance of growing in range and all-roundness. Through these country-wide celebrations Tagore's name is becoming known to people everywhere. We have recently built a fine Tagore Hall, and already we have an impressive programme of translations, of Tagore's poems, plays, short stories and short novels, in Kashmiri as well as in the other local languages of the State — Dogri, of the sub-montane Himalayas, and Bodhi, the language of the people of Ladakh It becomes, therefore, very relevant for us to know what is of durable significance in him.

Poetry, it has been rightly said, is written with words, not

5 Cp *Didi* (*Ekottarshati* page 135)

ideas ; but it is true nonetheless that every significant poet and writer has an attitude or outlook on life and nature and, may be, an insight and vision too. Some western critics have of late not been finding in him a well-knit system of thought a solid framework of dogma and doctrine, to hold fast to ; but in any legitimate sense of the word, Tagore is very much a thinker and, what is more, a seer. He has a vision of the unity of life. This "cosmic religion" (to quote a phrase of Einstein) is no doubt as old as the hills in India but Tagore's vision is distinguished in some ways. First, this vision of the unity of life is also a vision of joy, of *ananda*, and this not necessarily in a metaphysical sense. He brought back to us what is still re-invigorating to Indian literatures, a full and frank acceptance of life, of the simple great gifts, "this sky and the light, this body and the life and the mind".[6] He has had the sweet blessings of beauty and he feels blessed.

ऐ जीवने सुन्दरेर पेयेछि मधुर आशीर्वाद

This is something new ; for whatever tradition there has been of this (and it certainly has been there from the *Vedic Samhita* onwards), it has been overlaid with the other and more prolific tradition of renunciation and asceticism and withdrawal from the illusory and impermanent world of senses. Tagore courageously set his face against it.

वैराग्यसाधने मुक्ति, से आमार नय ॥[7]

"The finite is the true infinite, and love knows its truth", says the Sanyasi when he breaks his staff and his alms-bowl[8]. This our land of decay and death is surely not Heaven but it is our motherland.

मृर्तभूमि स्वर्ग नहे
से ये मातृभूमि—[9]

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6. *Gitanjali*, 14 7. *Gitanjali*, 73. 8. *Sanyasi or the Ascetic*. 9. *Svarga Hoite Biday*

He sings of the *Kshanik*, the *transient* and the momentary, the water bubble is not unreal, it is as real as the sea, it is but "a bond of creation", the infinite in the finite. This has a special interest for us in Kashmir for we inherit, in a sense, the *agama* tradition as interpreted by our Saiva Philosophers, Utpala and Abhinavagupta"—

मा किंचित त्यज, मा गहाण, विलस, स्वस्थो यथावस्थितः

Secondly, there is not only joy in life and love, there is joy in work too; and, indeed, while love is the inevitable corollary of the unity of life, the test of love is action and sacrifice. Nandini is not enough, there must be Ranjan also. And so our vision of the unity of life must not be a contemplative's meditation unrelated to life, it must find expression in love which is related to life and service. We must have not only Santiniketan but also Sriniketan He, therefore, stressed the duty we owe to "the lowliest and lost" in society[11]— an obligation which, in spite of the "*sarvabhoota-hiteratah*" precepts, we in India have been loath to discharge In a fine poem he says,

"I know thee as my God and stand apart. I know thee as my father and bow before thy feet.

Thou art the Brother among my brothers, but I heed them not; I divide not my earnings with them, thus sharing my all with thee".[12]

Thirdly, Tagore's patriotism is all-inclusive. He invites all, Hindus and Muslims, Christians and Englishman, the outcast and the Brahmin, to the Motherland's crowning.[13] And, what is equally important at the present day, his patriotism is grounded in universal humanism He had the poet's insight and a good man's love of fellow-men to know what we have

11 Cp *Apamaanita* and *Dhulaamandir (Ekottarshati)*

12 *Gitanjali* 77, also see Nos 10, 11 and 63

13 Cp *Bharata-tirtha*

come to know only through fear of nuclear weapons, that this is the only way. In his own words, he was a *Visvomānava*, a world man.

Therefore, Tagore's significance is enduring for our literatures and, let us hope, the re-discovery of his work and art will be a source of enrichment for them all.

RABINDRANATH AND URDU LITERATURE

R. F. Gorakhpuri

More than a hundred years ago when the establishment of British rule all over India and the enslavement of India were complete or nearly complete, the famous world thinker Karl Marx in his brief searching and revealing notes on India had X-rayed the historic forces which were moulding India's destiny. In an unforgettable sentence he called the British conquerers of India "Unconscious tools of history". He had seen as through a dark glass the unfolding drama of Indian history and the coming to birth of a new India. Macaulay who made a similar prophecy at about the same time about the inevitable effects of English education on the Indian mind leads one to perceive that the English men were perhaps not so much unconscious as half-conscious tools of history. Tagore was born soon after these prophecies were made. These prophecies were fulfilled with all their implications in the new Indian Renaissance heralded by Raja Ram Mohan Roy and the other pioneers in the field. On the cultural and humanistic plane, the forces of this renaissance became incarnated in the richest sense in Rabindranath Tagore. What all India was feeling more or less vaguely and indefinitely, Tagore felt with increasing depth and comprehensiveness. In him was realized, among other aspects and significance the universality and the world-wide message of the unique Indian culture.

India was becoming India again as a result of the dynamic forces, released in the country by British rule which acted like shock therapy on the body and the soul of India. India was being shocked into herself after age-long intervals of comparative spiritual inertia. The Upanishadic age which finds prophetic expression again in Tagore's famous essay entitled "*The Message of the Forest,*" the Pauranic age, the heroic ages of India, the ages of the birth of the Hindu Deva Mala, and,

then in the unfolding panorama of Indian history, the Muslim advent in India and the almost simultaneous rise of Vaishnavism, the decay after nearly eight centuries of the Indo-muslim culture and feudal-cum-mercantile order and the new birth-pangs and growing pains of a new India under the impact of Europe represented by a none too benign British rule — all these epochs of Indian history found reawakening in the depths of Tagore's personality and consciousness. Raja Ram Mohan Roy and other pioneers of the Brahmosamaj prominently included among whom was Tagore's revered father Maharshi Devendra Nath Tagore, other pioneers of the new Indian awakening in Bengal like Ishwar Chandra Vidyasagar, Ramkrishna and his world renowned disciple Swami Vivekananda, Aurobindo Ghosh, in Maharash[illegible] Bombay the leaders of Dharma Samaj and Sadha[illegible] such heralds of the new dawn as Dada B[illegible] deo Govind Ranade, Bal Ganga Dhar Til[illegible] Gokhale in Gujrat, Swami D[illegible] d [illegible] Mahatma Gandhi, in the P[illegible] over India the famous publ[illegible] tical and social leade[illegible] le throwing inward[illegible] so many angles [illegible] circle. This he[illegible] could truly ex[illegible] ring of light".

Something r[illegible] India. A str[illegible] was sweeping t[illegible] in all the l[illegible] An era had [illegible] opening decades [illegible] sub-consciously [illegible]

ing new values. Urdu was no exception. Tagore was the living power-house of the new humanism From him were to radiate new forces in literature and new aesthetic experiences. It has been pointed out that whether a writer reads or does not read the work of his contemporaries, he cannot escape their influence and their impact. Such an influence becomes all the more compelling and pervasive when the contemporary writer is so great and so truly representative of the spirit of the age as Tagore. In Indian literature, as in Indian life, we should never lose sight of the divergent unity of India. Tagore was not directly known to Urdu writer till after he was awarded the Nobel Prize and then became only partially known to them through a few translations mostly in English and some of them in Urdu. And yet the renaissance of which he was the greatest embodiment had begun to work in Urdu literature. Sir Syed, Hali, Mohammad Husain Azad, Nazir Ahmad, Shibli Nomani, Pandit Ratan Nath Sarshar, Suraj Narain Mehr, Jwala Prasad Barq, Agha Hashra Kashmiri, Narain Prasad Betab, Durga Sahai Saroor, Prem Chand, Sir Mohammad Iqbal, Akbar Allahabadi, Shad Zimabadi, Naubat Rai Nazar and the rising school of poets in the first two decades of our century like Hasrat Mohani, Fani, Yagana, Asghar, Jigar, Jagat Mohan Lal Ravan, Shyam Mohan Lal Jigar, the pioneers of the New Urdu journalism, all were witness to the new creative conciousness which had its living source and centre in Tagore. Poems voicing the new Indian nationalism, the glories of our past, the new social awareness and the mirroring forth of the glancing colours of the Indian landscape and the Indian scene, literature which held up the mirror to our multiaspected diverse life and re-interpreting the message and meaning of our architecture, our myths and legend, our world feeling and nature feeling and reaching out in its spiritual quest to the stars and beyond the stars, the birth of the short story, the novel, the new literary

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Something representing these forces was happening all over India. A strong wave of national and patriotic consciousness was sweeping the country from end to end. A new literature in all the languages of India had begun to be created. An era had come to an end. Indian literature in the opening decades of the present century was consciously and sub-consciously evolving a new inwardness and was discover-

ing new values. Urdu was no exception. Tagore was the living power-house of the new humanism. From him were to radiate new forces in literature and new aesthetic experiences. It has been pointed out that whether a writer reads or does not read the work of his contemporaries, he cannot escape their influence and their impact. Such an influence becomes all the more compelling and pervasive when the contemporary writer is so great and so truly representative of the spirit of the age as Tagore. In Indian literature, as in Indian life, we should never lose sight of the divergent unity of India. Tagore was not directly known to Urdu writer till after he was awarded the Nobel Prize and then became only partially known to them through a few translations mostly in English and some of them in Urdu. And yet the renaissance of which he was the greatest embodiment had begun to work in Urdu literature. Sir Syed, Hali, Mohammad Husain Azad, Nazir Ahmad, Shibli Nomani, Pandit Ratan Nath Sarshar, Suraj Narain Mehi, Jwala Prasad Barq, Agha Hashra Kashmiri, Narain Prasad Betab, Durga Sahai Saroor, Prem Chand, Sir Mohammad Iqbal, Akbar Allahabadi, Shad Zimabadi, Naubat Rai Nazar and the rising school of poets in the first two decades of our century like Hasrat Mohani, Fani, Yagana, Asghar, Jigar, Jagat Mohan Lal Ravan, Shyam Mohan Lal Jigar, the pioneers of the New Urdu journalism, all were witness to the new creative conciousness which had its living source and centre in Tagore. Poems voicing the new Indian nationalism, the glories of our past, the new social awareness and the mirroring forth of the glancing colours of the Indian landscape and the Indian scene, literature which held up the mirror to our multiaspected diverse life and re-interpreting the message and meaning of our architecture, our myths and legend, our world feeling and nature feeling and reaching out in its spiritual quest to the stars and beyond the stars, the birth of the short story, the novel, the new literary

criticism, the birth and growth of new literary forms such as biography, history, the essay, philosophical and other reflective writing— all these reveal that the light of the renaissance emanating from Tagore was being reflected in the many coloured dome of the new Urdu literature.

Who can fail to perceive or half perceive that the fine sensuousness and richness and the three dimensional solidity of many poems, portraying natural scenery and the graces of the human body. In the work of *Josh Malihabadi* and *Akhtar Sherani* are of the same genre as many of the passages in Tagore Many of the songs and poems of Hafiz Jalandhari and Ahsan Danish, the themes of many poems af Tilok Chand Mahroom suggest the influences of the literary forces emanating from Tagore. The greatest contemporary of Tagore among Urdu writers was Sir Mohammad Iqbal. Although Iqbal felt and said, very wrongly it is true, that Tagore's poetry was dreamy and encouraged in action and lived in the world of the lotus-eaters yet inspite of himself Iqbal is powerfully influenced and moved by many of those forces and thought-currents, ideals and visions of life, of which Tagore was the greatest representative. Iqbal's vision of India and vision of the universe and of humanity, his heightened consciousness of the purpose of life, his doctrine of the self-hood of a people and the merging of individual self-hood in the cosmic self-hood, all these were a reblossoming of the new dawn and the emerging of new horizons which had their source in Tagore. Iqbal in his later work often enough gave a separatist and a mistaken turn and twist to the spiritual dynamism and activism which to discerning students is a quality which he shares with his elder contemporary Tagore. Tagore's vision of India and his religion of humanity are something higher and greater than the pan-Islamism of Iqbal.

'Nearly thirty years ago Tagore, in the course of a letter to Iqbal, wrote that he had come to learn of the many great achievements of Iqbal in the realm of poetry and expressed his fervent desire that their mutual contributions to culture and humanism would be supplementary and complementary. It was to be and yet alas, in some respects it was not to be. As the elder contemporary of Iqbal, Tagore sent his greetings to his great younger contemporary.

What Iqbal in a moment of impatient criticism, which was more impatient than critical, more intolerant than discerning called the dreaminess of Tagore's poetry was really a wide-awake dream. Out of such dreams revolutions are born and nations rediscover themselves. We are reminded of the well known lines of the English poet

We are the music makers
And we are the dreamers of dreams.
Yet we are the makers and shakers
Of the world for ever it seems.

Iqbal had, it seems, second thoughts on Tagore In a circle of his intimate friends he is reported to have once remarked that while he (Iqbal) extolled action in his poetry, he himself had failed to become a man of action. Then he added that while Tagore's poetry was a poetry of dreams Tagore himself was a man of action

So much about the new tone and temper created in our literature by Tagore There were other manifestations of Tagore's influence also. As a result of the Urdu translation of several works of Tagore soon after he became a Nobel laureate and as the result of the study of many of his works in English translations a new school of writers arose who cultivated what came to be known as the aesthetic style in Urdu, called as *Adab-e-Lateef*. Tagore presided over the second Session of the All India Progressive Writers' Conference. Urdu writers were among the main participants in the Conference. The

movement of the progressive literature was indirectly the product of the inexhaustible forces let loose in the country by Tagore and his work. The inspiration and the illumination as well as the lyric tremble of Tagore's poetry, his sense of the divinity of the earth and the interplay of the finite with the infinite the eternal Hide and Seek, the fusion in the literature created by him of the human and the mystic, his rich and highly cultured paganism have been the central formative forces in the making of my own Urdu poetry.

Urdu literature, specially Urdu poetry of the future is bound to receive increasingly the impact and the impetus of the literature created by Tagore, when as planned and as being executed by the Sahitya Akademi a standard edition of the translation of Tagore's work in Urdu appear in the recent future. Urdu literature has yet to receive invaluable lyric and spiritual gifts from Tagore. The poetry of the home and the homely, the poetry of womanhood, the poetry of childhood, a more deepened and heightened and richer poetry of nature, a new sense of life, a new vision of humanity, a re-discovery of India — all these and much else are in store for the Urdu writer of tomorrow as a result of a discerning and sensitive study of the works of Tagore. In the years to come more and still more Urdu writers in the technique of thought, feeling and expression in the idiom and the rhythm of consciousness in the striking of new notes in literature will take the cue from Tagore. The Urdu writer of tomorrow, after he has discovered Tagore, will feel as Keats felt nearly hundred years ago on first looking into Chapman's Homer :

Then felt I like some watcher of the skies,
When a new planet swims into his Ken ;
Or like stout Cortez when with eagle eyes
He started at the Pacific — and all his men
looked at each other with a wild surmise —
Silent upon a peak in Darien.

RABINDRANATH AND TAMIL LITERATURE

T. N KUMARASWAMY

BEFORE coming to the subject proper, I have to say a few words about my first contact with Gurudeva of revered memory. That was in 1931. I had the temerity to rush to this hollowed spot, Punya-tirtha, Santiniketan, where the world's greatest bard lived, thought, and poured forth his soul in songs. That meeting changed the whole trend of my life. Even now, I feel his presence here That face well-chiselled as a statuary, that aquiline nose and those dream-laden eyes conjure up before me. Oh, those words he spoke when I met him — that was not language but a great wave of the ocean gathering force and grandeur culminating in one golden symphony of vision scattering rainbows. To me it was like an extension of myself with a touch so fine as the wing of a moth, or the resistless sweep of a cataract. That eternal pilgrim, is not dead. The great Poet himself has said in a place ·

কে বলে গো সেই প্রভাতে নেই আমি
সকল খেলায় করবো খেলা এই আমি।
নতুন নামে ডাক্‌বে মোরে
বাঁধবে নতুন বাহু ডোরে
আসবো যাবো চিরদিনের সেই আমি।

To that great seer,
I bow my head in obeisance

Due to the western impact, the latter half of the 19th century saw a great social and literary up-heaval in Bengal. Craze for westernization in life and in the way of thinking raged with vigour for sometime, until healthy signs were visible in the horizon. Rabindranath was the harbinger of that Renaissance and he was fortunate to be born in that age. He was the first supreme lyric poet of India in whom all the finer influences of the orient and the occident happily blended.

That was an auspicious day both for the Western world and India, when the haunting rhythm of his Gitanjali attracted the attention of such critics like W. B. Yeats. Rabindranath won the noble laurel for literature in 1913 which proclaimed to the world that a great Poet fit to be ranked with Valmiki, Kalidasa, Kamban, and Shakespeare had emerged in India, with a message for humanity. Tagore luckily found English suited to communicate his thoughts and writings both with non-Bengali India and with the world outside.

It is to the English renderings of his Bengali lyrics that the Tamils are primarily indebted for their first acquaintance with Tagore's genius. The Tamils at large were ignorant of him, and only to the English educated section of the Tamils that the magic casement of his rich creations was thrown open.

Barriers of language separate people and a writer in one part is practically unknown to the other parts. Exchange of thoughts is possible only through a common medium; English came to the rescue. Though Rabindranath was well established as a great Poet, in his own Bengal, it was only after reading the English Gitanjali that the south realized the value of learning Bengali to understand him properly: It was fortunate for us that our great national poet Subrahmanya Bharati was the first to draw inspiration from Rabindranath. It was he who introduced to the Tamil people those brilliant short stories. Bharati's renderings of the eight stories of Tagore were marvels of expression, which can hardly be excelled by any later writer. His translations whetted the taste of the Tamils to read more of Tagore's stories. In the wake of Bharati came other scholars like Sri Sri Acharya who gave us stories of Tagore directly done from Bengali. Tagore's '*Ghater Katha*' (The story of the River-stair) inspired almost the first great short story in Tamil. V. V. S. Iyer's '*The tree by the tank*'—and since then Tagore's influence on Tamil short-story writers has been

growing I can say, some of my own stories, have taken the colouring from his master-craft.

After 1933, we can see Tamil scholars proficient in Bengali coming forward to give one by one those treasures of Tagore for the enrichment of Tamil. Authentic translations from *Galpa Guccha*, have been collected in eight volumes. The Tamilian feels something akin to him, in the life of the Bengali home that is portrayed by Tagore in his short-stories. The dumb-girl Subha, Ratan, in *Post-master*, Anu in *Bhai-phonta*, Saila in *Madhyavarttini*, Mrinu in Samapti, Phatik in *Chutti*, Fakirchand in Muktir Upay are all characters very familiar too, in our land

Coming to his novels, I can say, that his first novel to be done into Tamil was '*Jogajog*' It appeared as a serial under the caption '*Kumudini*', in the prominent magazine Ananda Vikatan. The translator Srimati Ranganayaki had done her part creditably. The characterization of '*Kumudini*' is one that the Tamils will never forget When Nowkadubi under the title '*Puyal*' was first published it took the Tamil public, with its gripping story theme This created a craving among Tamil readers to read Tagore's works chiefly novels more and more. Then successively came Malancha (Poonthottam), Dui Bon (Iru) Char Adhyay (Nalu Adhyayam), Chaturanga. These were veritable intellectual treats to the Tamils. Smt Savitri Ammal's translation of Ghare Baire occupies a distinct place in the fiction world. The technique adopted by Tagore i. e. the characters speaking themselves unravelling the plot has induced many of our younger writers to experiment it in their own respective creations. Translations undoubtedly are clear indications of the influence of a writer on another language and in such a short time it will not be possible to assess the influence of Rabindranath on our Tamil writers. His novels to be frank, have only limited appeal. They are not taken in by the Tamils

with avidity as those of Saratchandra. The Tamil reader will remember Tagore only as a great story-teller. It is a wonder that even poet Bharati who was ably fitted for this job did not touch the poetical field of Tagore. Before his death he should have come across some five collections of Tagore's poems in English.

After a decade scholars like V. R. M. Chettiar alive to the beauties of Tagore's poems came with their Tamil renderings, etc., these translations done from English have lost much of the charm that is found in the original. It is a good sign that the Sahitya Akademi has given us recently a collection of Tagore's poems done into Tamil direct from the Bengali originals. This Ekottarasati, I think, will surely reveal to the Tamil readers, the richness, the variety, the vastness and versatility of Rabindranath. Of late Prof. Srinivasa Raghevan, Sri K. V. Jagannathan, and Tamiz Azagan have come forward with their metrical renderings of Tagore's poems. Some of them are really excellent. Mention must be made of the beautiful metrical renderings of Tagore's *'Urvashi'* in Tamil, which has almost captured the cadence and etherealness of the original.

The Plays of Tagore : The Tamils are good lovers of dramas, and have always welcomed any play from any reputed author ; whether East or West, when only if it mirrored to them, life in all its fullness, containing tense situations, kindlings, supreme agonies and raptures. According to this norm only some plays of Tagore like Visarjan, Prakritir-Pratisodha, Dak Ghar, Chandalika, Malini can be said to have popularity. Some of these have been staged also successfully. As for Tagore's symbolic plays like Tasher-Desh, Raja, Rakta-Karabi, Achala-yatan etc., which are pregnant with meaning, I can say the Tamils have yet to get a taste for them. Recent staging of the play Tasher-Desh and Dak Ghar has kindled to some extent

enthusiasm in the mind of the Tamils to these finer creations of Tagore's genius.

The great volume of essays and letters of Tagore has not reached the Tamils, with the sole exceptions of Tagore's 'Letters to his wife' Here and there we find his essays published in prominent journals like Kalaimagal. Two big collections of Tagore's essays are in preparation. The Sahitya Akademi will be releasing them soon. The author has done the hard task of translating Tagore's essays for the Akademi. The Tamil reader will be surprised to find in that collection, the range of subjects handled by that master-mind

As to books about Tagore in Tamil only a few can be found. Our learned friend Sri K. Chandrasekaran's story of Rabindranath in Tamil is a remarkable achievement worthy of his erudition In a small compass he has dwelt upon the various aspects of Tagore's creations. He has almost made Tagore familiar to the Tamils creating in them an appetite to know more of the great Poet But a good biography of Tagore is still a desideratum I am attempting a work in that direction, though I may not be sure of success. In a series of articles contribured to Kalki under the name Gurudevarin Kural (the Voice of Gurudeva), Prof. Srinivasa Raghavan has given a comparative study of Tagore's mysticism with that of the Tamil saints Alwars and Tayumanar. His exposition of Tagore's child poems comparing them with Pillaittamil Kavyas reveals his depth of learning and grasp of the subject. He has touched a filed hitherto untrodden by others.

The spread of Rabindra-Sangeet in Tamil land is yet in the experimental stage The Madras Tagore Centenary Committee is doing something in this direction, by holding classes to coach those interested in the type of music. For the fastidious Tamil ear which is accustomed to Karnatic music it will take long

time to appreciate or absorb or assimilate the nuances of Rabindra-Sangeet.

This is the era of Tagore. Before the end of this century the Tagore-spirit will overflow the world. As Edward Thompson says, "there is an enormous body of really beautiful work than any other poet can show. It will never cease to delight and it will keep his name honoured." Rabindranath will live for ever !

RABINDRANATH AND TAMIL LITERATURE

K. CHANDRASEKARAN

WHEN a poet of such universal appeal like Rabindranath Tagore has also lived four score years and in times of great international impact of ideas, no wonder he has perceptibly as well as imperceptibly made himself felt on various other languages and literatures apart from his own. No doubt the world outside, even as the Indian continent outside Bengal, became aware of his genius only with the Noble Award in November, 1913. But it will be re-writing history in violation of facts if anybody should go the extreme length of saying that even in his own province of Bengal his prominence as a writer and his superior claim to recognition as a poet of outstanding calibre were accepted only after that momentous event. For earlier, in January of 1912, a very important function was held in his honour in the Calcutta Town Hall, when tributes were paid to his literary achievements of surpassing merit. He also on that occasion with rare intuition sang the song of praise of his motherland beginning with, 'Jana Gana, Mana, adhinayāka Jaya hai' which to-day has gained the unique distinction of being adopted as the National Anthem of the Sovoreign Democratic Republic of India.

But who can gainsay also the rare insight of another illustrious bard of the South—a compeer and a patriot—the justly famous Subrahmanya Bharati—when he no less specifically referred to Rabindranath's multifaced literary output of exquisite worksmanship than to his foresight and vision in describing Gandhiji, who had just then entered Indian politics, as "the singular leader of men, a veritable incarnation of Dharma by the name of Mohandas *Karma* Chandra Gandhi. Perhaps, it is not so much an accidental association of the two in Bharati's mind as a prognosis of the future identity of purposes and aims that actuated the two tireless sentinels to watch our civilization

from straying too much into materialism of the modern scientific age. Need there be anything more substantial to prove the wonderful capacity of the Tamil poet to penetrate far into the future concerning these two great personalities ?

But Bharati was not the only single swallow which cannot make a summer. True, another erudite scholar and visionary, the late V. V. S. Aiyar of Pondicherry, was equally eloquent in his admiration of Tagore's genius and was almost the earliest to learn Bengali in order to render the poet's thoughts into his own language. Together Bharati and V. V. S. Aiyar, attempted a translation of "Āsa-Bhanga" (a collection of stories of Tagore) into easy Tamil. The enthusiam of V. V. S. Aiyar for Tagore's art soon induced him to imtitate Tagore's "River steps" in publishing a collection of his own stories under the caption of The Peepal Tree on the Tank Bund.

Bengal had then come to the forefront of the Indian literary scene through many of her accredited writers like Madhusudan Dutt, Bankim Chandra Chatterjee, Romesh Chandra Dutt, who were all pioneers in a new medium of writing, not familiar till then to literatures in the Indian Regional languages. Of them, Bankim Babu was a star of the first magnitude, who not only enabled the language to liberate itself from earlier ponderousness of style but gave the world many a historical novel of unprecedented quality. Not only Bengal awoke to a sense of pride in that master of fiction, but Andhra and Tamil Nad vied with each other in translating his works and sharing the literary enjoyment hitherto unexperienced in our writers. The unrest consequent upon Bengal-Partition agitation of 1905 served only to heighten the pleasure derived from perusing a novel like *Ananda Matam* from Bankim Babu, reflecting the tendencies in the youth of Bengal to take to organising political groups pledged to liberate the country from a foreign yoke. Mahesh Kumar Sarma is a name to reckon with for translations

from Bengali into Tamil. There was a very perceptible avidity in readers for translation of Bengali novels of the stamp of Bankim Chandra Chatterjee's famous historical romances, viz. Durges Nandini, Sitaram, Chandrasekar, Vrisha Vriksha, etc

The advent of Bankim Babu's novels paved the way for appreciation of Tagore's fictional output though there is quite an unmistakable difference between the two in their quality and matter Tagore's mind was more of a poet's and hence often passages of lyricism can be found strewn in his prose writings, whether novel, romance or short story. Moreover he probed human psychology and human motive with the fusion of cultures resulting from Western contacts and the type of education we have received under the British rule. On the other hand, Bankim's novels portray a society and stage in the country's history that have passed with the dawn of an all-round awakening and social consciousness, particularly of the educated persons in India. *Rajarshi*, a novel of Tagore, was originally rendered into Telegu which again got into Tamil garb from the Telegu.

The decade after the first world war saw Tagore's popularity at its zenith Because of the reputed publisher Macmillans' enterprise, the works of Tagore-poems, shortstories, novels, essays and autobigraphy — all attracted attention from everywhere, though South India was not totally willing to be engulfed in the first flush of Tagore's success in translations. If Bengal had detractors of Tagore who, despite wider recognition that poured in on the poet still had harsh things to say of his mind and art, Tamil Nad developed an indifference to all types of suggestiveness in writing that formed the core of Tagore's art. Save the English educated who for fashion's sake displayed some of Tagore's famous works like Gitanjali, Gardener, Sadhana and Crescent Moon on their shelves, the bulk of Tamil Nad's reading section did not really go near the poet's supreme

merit as an out-and-out original thinker and master-spirit of the age ; they stopped with reading some of his fictions which, compared to Saratchandra's output in the same field, may have proved also not considerable from any aspect.

Nevertheless the few who were drawn to Tagore's inexhaustible powers of imagination and suggestion combined with his spiritual experience of unconventional type, began to admire some of his perennial messages to humanity. Apart from merely translating his words and phrases, those who directly rendered him into other languages from his original Bengali hardly evinced the zest due to a writer of such huge proportions and humanity as an unparalelled phenomenon, after the times of the authors of the great epics. If at all Tagore contributed to the mystical and religious thought, according to some it was nothing new or distinct from what the Nayanmars and Alwars of old in the South have sung in exaltation of spirit and ecstacy of mood. But they forget that the experience of God in every individual cannot be the same as in another, however much the language of mysticism may remind one of similarity characteristic of most of the outpourings of liberated souls. Even there Tagore's individuality cannot be missed if scanned to its very roots. For nature-mysticism is something of an unusual feature in him, and again his devotion to the immanent spirit bears no relation to any of the known God or Godesses of Hindu pantheon. His sensibility of God's presence everywhere and at every moment of his life, his utter humility before the Giver of all the gifts, his perennial wonder at God's manifestations in flower and fruit, sea and mountain, fish and fowl, man and woman—all ever recreating for him new life, and his constant correctives applied to himself as to others, have nowhere found such parallels in the whole history of world's literature. More than all, the whole or complete life of man which had an unflagging allurement for him generated

a philosophy in his heart that received its confirmation more from the sages of the Upanishads Perhaps Tamil Nad is yet to receive these and similar intimations from Tagore, however much they may have read him and translated him from his original Bengali or his English version.

Nevertheless early students of Tagore like V. Narayan and K. Savitri ammal conveyed the heart of Tagore's writings even from his English renderings *Wreck* the novel and *Chitra* the one-act play, both found themselves in Tamil garbs as early as 1922 in the pages of Tamil Olagu (Tamil-world), a weekly preserving high literary standards *Yogāyōg* was rendered into Tamil under the caption of *Kumudini* by Ranganayaki Thatham, a distinguished lady of versatile talents.

The real service to Tagore in Tamil Nad happened only with the two brothers T. N. Kumaraswamy and T. N Senapati having learnt Bengali with devotion and care and rendering faithfully Tagore's works into Tamil. Novels, short stories, plays, even essays like *Religion of Man*, have now seen the light of day as part of a growing Tagorean literature in Tamil. To say the least, there has been such an ardent desire on the part of the brothers to give Tamil readers Tagore's gems, that the advent of the Sahitya Akademi recently into the field acts only as a superfluous agency for spreading Tagorean thoughts. Desigavinayakam Pillai, another celebrated poet, in verse-form rendered the Gitanjali, while S. D. S Yogiar in his own powerful manner captured Tagore's mysticism and magic of poetry in lines of invigorating freshness.

A question may be asked, what exactly has been the influence of Tagore on recent Tamil literature. The answer is difficult to be framed. For perceptibly there is little to indicate the suggestiveness of his art and the power of his imagery ever having influenced writers here But one will be false to himself if he cannot point to the inspiration

in some quarters that the poet has supplied to creative writing.

At a time when Tamil Nad was only steeped in English and using it, however imperfectly, for self-expression, Tagore's visit to the South in 1918 aroused the feeling in many hearts that even like him in Bengali, they should take to Tamil as the medium for all self-expression. If the savant Mahamahopadhyaya V. Swaminatha Ayar, after a brief talk with the poet, felt a great hope for Tamil language and Tamil literature soon recoving from its torpor or if T. K. Chidambaranatha Mudaliar entertained confirmations, after meeting the poet, of his favourite theories of no language other than one's own ever succeeding as a fit vehicle for any type of creative writing, it requires no greater proof of the poet's genuineness and accuracy of feeling in matters concerning literature. Anyway that was a greater service to Tamil Nad done by the poet than all his works put together and rendered into the language. For it enabled the Tamilian to hold his head among the rest and feel that, come what may, he shall not flinch from speaking and writing his inmost feelings except only in his own mother tongue. Bharati led the way for a fresh vigour in the direction. Tagore blessed the change of outlook and sense of confidence springing up in Tamil Nad. Both have been responsible for fostering, each in his own measure, the tender shoots of hope and enterprise in the Tamil writers

There has been certainly keener interest shown, in recent years, in Tagore's works on account of more persons familiarising themselves with Bengali. But one sad conclusion none can escape, namely, that the Tagorean art of subtle suggestion and infinite experience and philosophy of the oneness of all life, hardly ever have penetrated modern writers anywhere, particularly South India. To be frank, there is little of aesthetic perception connoting a higher sense of values to the creative

writer from a study of Tagore's masterly and original way of viewing life and religion as one and indivisible. The short story technique in Tagore's hands has received an orientation and distinction which few alone have understood or imbibed. Feeble echoes of his art and mind no doubt one can detect here and there, but the profoundity of his observations of life or his totally sympathetic pictures of humanity have rarely shared the honour of emulation from the new writers of this age. Perhaps the Bengali novelist, Saratchandra, has greater admirers in Tamil Nad than Tagore for the realism portrayed in his novels. Kandekar and a host of popular writers in other Regional literatures, are more easily absorbed. Tagore remains unique also in not being followed easily by any one with modern literary equipment. Perhaps, Tagore is yet to receive from Tamil Nad the full import of a homage to his spirit, as long as it does not understand that literature and life are not apart as experiences, but the same.

RABINDRANATH AND SINDHI LITERATURE

RAM PANJWANI

I WAS BORN and brought up in Sind, that "unhappy valley" which lies on the north-western tip of the Indian subcontinent, and which has borne the brunt of successive invasions for close on twelve centuries. During long period, Sind lay quiescent and dark under the heel of alien conquerors, a cultural backwater more or less cut off from the main, life-giving currents of thought that somehow kept alive the spirit of India in other parts of the country. When the British annexed Sind, they, too, denied it a system of liberal administration on the ground that it was a backward area. Educationally, culturally, administratively, Sind was treated as a poor relation—tolerated, but never helped.

Then, about the turn of the present century, the cultural tide that rose strong and purposeful in Bengal touched our desert shores. Men began to feel the stirrings of a new life. They awakened from a long, trance-like existence to an awareness of beauty that is truth, of beauty that vitalises the spirit and touches it with the incommunicable wonder and mystery of the dawn. The Brahmo Samaj made its home in Sind, and attracted such outstanding men as Kauromal Chandanmal, Sadhu Navalrai, Hiranand and Dayaram Gidumal. Soon thereafter, we felt the impact of Tagore. We discovered something new that was not quite new, for in Tagore we recognised the authentic accent of our great Sufi poet-saints and mystics, and heard, as in a dream, our own voice speaking to us with a power and bell-like clarity that echoed down the long corridors of an immemorial past.

These Sufi poet-saints of ours derived their main inspiration from the great poets of Iran and the mystic traditions of Hinduism; for even in Sind—which, at one time, was an integral part of Aryavarta, the home of the Vedas and of the

Upanishads—traces of this culture survived, and were woven into the enchanting fabric of their songs. These were of the earth, earthy; yet there was a symbolism in them which communicated to our people a sense of the Infinite in the finite and of a continuity in life, and which made them feel that "there is a divinity that shapes our ends, rough-hew them as we will".

The songs of these Sufi poet-saints, of Shah Abdul Latif and Sachal and Sami, were sung in the market-place and in places where men congregate. They were on the lips of the peasants in the fields and the tillers of the soil in far-flung cottages. They were chanted by the rich and the noble and the powerful, and sung on river-banks and canals by fisherfolk by everyone who had ears to listen and a voice to speak. They thrilled to these songs even as they sang them, these poor, helpless, infantile children of Providence, for they lived close to the soil and close to nature—simple unsophisticated men and women, rugged as the earth, and as patient as a well. In this manner, the Sufi poets reached the heart of the common man, for the stories the songs narrated were based on the legends and folk-tales of Sind, and were rendered in the simple, homely idiom and rhythm which had come down to us as a tradition from a hoary past. And they were revered, these poet-saints, for they opened up for the common man a pathway to God—a path that led to Him, not through mosques and temples, nor through worship at any shrine, but through a sense of kinship which binds humanity to the light-washed feet of God

When Tagore came, and we translated him in the rhythm of our language, he became one with our Sufi poets—a part of our tradition, of our very way of life and thought; for he preached a message that had a special appeal for us, a message that preached the religion of man in a world in which men prey, vampire-like, upon their fellow men.

In the deep peace of hot, moon-haunted nights ; in the hush of silence that seems to wait the birth of some incommunicable thing on frosty nights when the moon sails among the stars an apparent queen wandering minstrels would move slowly from door to door, singing the songs that moved tremulously along the pulses of our being ; but while, in the past, they used to sing only the songs of our Sufi poets, now they added to their repertoire the songs of Tagore as well, for these songs, too, struck the same chords, and evoked the same responses. They were of our people and ours, rendered into the authentic rhythms and idiom of our own language ; rendered ; even, in the very "ragas" that they had become a part of our life.

It could not be otherwise. We had taken to the devotional poetry of Guru Nanak, Meerabai, Tulsidas, Kabir and Farid, and it had become very popular with our people. But it had never been translated into our own language, for, apparently, it did not evoke the kind of responses which Tagore's poetry did. We do not believe in dividing frontiers. We are citizens of the world. We have made our homes in every part of the globe. The universality of Tagore's message, his deep and abiding humanity, his insistence that God dwells with the peasant in the field and the tiller in his cottage, his belief, not in renunciation, but in dynamic contact with life — these transcend the physical boundaries that divide man from man ; and reach out to the pulsing life of the spirit within. This, I believe, accounts for his phenomenal popularity with us, and for the far-reaching and pervasive influence he has exercised on our literature.

And so the demand for translations of his work grew apace. In quick succession, came translations of *The Gardener*, *Crescent Moon*, *The Post Office*, *The Gitanjali*, *Fruit-Gathering*, and a number of short stories and novels. Talented writers like Lalchand Amardinomal, M. U. Malkani and others rendered these works

in the idiom and rhythm of our Sufi poetry and these were set to the indigenous "ragas" and sung by our people. They acquired the very fragrance of the soil that gave us birth. Gandhiji gave us the cult of duty; Tagore that of beauty. This cult spread in Sind; so much so that everything connected with him became something worthwhile. Men affected long flowing hair, and sang his songs with the wildness and abandon associated with the Master Many of our writers went to Bengal to learn at his feet; and one of them, in a moment of inspired lunacy, wrote ·

"Bengal is my country, the soil that feeds and nourishes me".

Some time ago, at a meeting of the Sahitya Akademi, we were considering which of Tagore's books should be rendered into Sindhi. The matter had to be shelved, for we found that they had all been translated into our language. This is a measure of our passion for Tagore.

There is a saying: Jaha na Rase Ravi waha Rase Kavi

(A poet can reach places which even the light of the sun can not penetrate) In Gurudeva, however, the deep insight of the poet is combined with the light of the sun that dispels darkness everywhere His message has girdled the globe. We are told that when our great poetess, Sarojini Naidu, happened to enter a cottage in a remote Hungarian village, she was thrilled to find a peasant reading a translation of *The Gitanjali*. She would have been equally thrilled had she visited our homes in Sind, for there *Gurudeva's songs were sung to* indigenous tunes. Rabindrath's influence on the lives and literature of the people of Sind has been deep and abiding. Our poets, novelists and dramatists owe a great deal to him Not infrequently, Bewas, that prince among Sindhi poets, has derived his inspiration from him. Groups have been formed for a study of his works, and amateurs have got together to spread him message through Rabindranath Tagore Dramatic Clubs.

New experiments in Sindhi poetic forms owe their origin to Gurudeva's free-flowing verse. Even a Muslim like Hyder Jatoi has come under his influence; for the content of his poetry is socialistic. The work of Bewas, too, bears an unmistakable stamp of the style and thought of Tagore, for his subjects are drawn from lowly life — the farmer, the labourer, the tiller of the soil and the stone-cutter — these are the sources of his inspiration. When Bewas sings of Lord Krishna, and says—

> He has left Mathura, and Gokul he has left. You cannot find Him on the banks of the Jamuna. But seek for Him in the City of Service. Ask for Him there, and you will find Him—

he is echoing the thought of Tagore in a verse that bears the imprint of Tagore. Bewas has thus created a new style and pioneered a new tradition in Sindhi poetry.

Again, when Tagore sings—

> God stands outside the door; His watchful patience knows no bounds. He will never force open the door if shut against him.

he is saying something with which we are already familiar, for the idea had already found symbolic expression in our poetry. Gurudeva, however, cuts through this symbolism, and speaks directly of God seeking to enter the inner sanctuary of man's spirit. In much the same way under the influence of Gurudeva, Bewas sings:

> With downcast eyes tear-filled, and with anxious heart Who is he who stands without the door? It is the Beloved, waiting for the door to be flung wide open so that he may enter into his possession.

Here we hear the authentic voice of Tagore in rhythms that are native to Sind.

us belongs to us. In his songs I have heard the

voice of the heroines of our legends and folk-tales. When Tagore sings of the coming of the beloved and of his departure in disappointment because the lover carelessly slept through, I remember the story i e. of Sassui and of Moomal, and when he chants of the Beloved singing to the accompaniment of the lyre and captivating the heart with music, I recall the great minstrel Bijal, the magic of whose melody so charmed Rai Diach that he gladly presented to him his own head in payment of his divine song. Again, when Tagore tells us of the Princess who, in the absence of her beloved, throws off her finery and scatters her ornaments, I remember the story of Lila who realised that the decoratives of her beauty were meaningless when the beloved was not there to thrill to that beauty.

Before I conclude, I should like to refer to the day Gurudeva passed away. I was travelling in a bus when I saw the news of his death featured in banner headlines on the front page of an afternoon paper. It was somewhat warm, but I felt chilled to the bone — as if I had lost some one very dear to me. That is how Tagore affects us. He is the voice of the inarticulate, the eyes and ears and conscience of us all. He is the only one of our saints who has not refused to live. He writes out of the deep of life, though his spirit is always on the wing. He is like a tree, deep-rooted in the soil from which it draws nourishment, with its far-spreading branches reaching out to the sky — symbols of the eternally striving, eternally questing, eternally yearning spirit.

If I were asked to mention the names of Sindhi poets who have left a lasting impression on my mind, I would include Tagore in the list ; for he is as much a poet of Sind as are Shah Sachal, Sami and others Tagore is my poet as much as he is yours !

RABINDRANATH AND SINDHI LITERATURE

HASHOO KEWAL RAMANI

RABINDRANATH belonged to Sind no less than to Bengal, and his was the greatest impact on Sindhi literature at a time when it was groping for a new direction. Perhaps, the genius of Sind had foreseen this development. Way back in 1901 when Poet Tagore started this illustrious institution, among the five teachers selected by him for the new experiment was a Sindhi, by name, Rev. Rewachand.

Krishna Kripalani, another enterprising Sindhi who has done so much in the realm of rendering Tagore for the benefit of the outside world, also taught here and even married the Poet's grand-daughter. The stream of young scholars who came here from distant Sind in a spirit of pilgrimage returned with a rich aroma of Santiniketan culture. The school of young, progressive writers which grew just before the partition was led by one such scholar Sobho Gianchandani, who still remains wedded to his ancestral soil across the border.

This mutual debt between Sind and Bengal, the extreme limbs of Mother India as we knew once, seems to have brought me for the first time to this soil where I could reach out so far only through journalistic features rendered in what has been recognised as a new style in Bengali language. And I have come here to say that my language rooted in the antiquity of Mohenjo-Daro is passing today through a struggle of life and death.

It is also a fact of contemporary history that the struggle for the bare survival of Sindhi language during these fourteen years has been carried on by young and impoverished writers and poets, publishers and educationists. If our literature has progressed and even ventured into newer forms of expression, it is not a little due to its great heritage of mystical-*cum*-heroic poetry imbued with the spirit of struggle which has been idealised as superior to the fulfilment itself.

The literary tradition of Sind was rooted in the factors of history and geography which made the lower Indus Valley a miniature Hind — a conflux of various races, religions and cultural patterns The *Wahdamat* of the earliest Arab philosophers mingled with the indigenous *Vedantic* tradition, and the Persian influences produced here a rich pattern of Suffi thought. Music which was censured elsewhere as unlawful became the rhythm of an entire people's life. Every village had its poet, revered alike by Hindus and Muslims as a saintly being, and every decade produced a master of outstanding distinction. The Niagara of poetry and song which flowed down the centuries in what was known as a desert province sparkled with mystic ecstasy and quest for universality.

Three great poets — Sachal, the Ever-Intoxicated, Sami, the Hindu with a quieter introspection, and Shah Lateef who had the grandeur of the mighty Indus — bequethed a literary tradition which has moulded the consciousness of every succesive generation. As Shah sang in his days, "Mine are not mere verses, but verily the *ayyats* (of the holy Quran) !"

Rabindranath, whose own poetry was inspired by the rustic *bouls* and the devotional, *vaishnavite* tradition, was aware of Sind's unique heritage when he paid his first visit there in 1923 in connection with the Bengal Flood Relief Fund. On his way from Karachi to Hyderabad, he made it a point to break the train journey at Kotri so that he could cross the Indus by boat and listen to the Sindhi *kafi* and *wai* rendered by accomplished musicians with the aid of *yaktara* and the earthen *matika*.

The Poet received a royal reception in Sind which had already borne the impact of Bengal's renaissance through the Brahmo Samaj, the Swadeshi movement and Bankim Chandra's creative writings The social awareness aroused by this impact was now reflected in the literary movement whose guiding

inspiration had been so far restricted to indigenous poetry and folklore, or Persian and Arabic works of antiquity, or Hindu and Sikh scriptures. The leaders of the Sindhi literature at that time represented by veterans like Bherumal Meharchand, Lalchand Amardinomal and Jethmal Parsram were among the first to recognise the significance of Tagore's emergence by translating his earlier works as far back as 1917. It was the late Jethmal Parsram who organised the Poet's tour in Sind with the exuberant manifesto, "Welcome, Rabindra beloved, welcome ! we know not whether you are the nightingale and our hearts the roses, or whether you are the rose and we the nightingales !"

Bankim Chandra and Premchand had already stimulated in Sindhi literature the new movement of creative writing in the context of the developing society with its new problems. The Hindu minority had emerged in the wake of the British rule as new bourgeois class with a broader outlook and newer cultural urges. It was also a period of trial and error, reflecting perhaps the cultural neurosis of a minority seeking progress and to that extent facing alienation from the native kinship with the majority sons of the soil who were held fast within the unchanging, feudal setup.

Tagore's prose-poems and poetic prose provided now just the stuff which bridged the humanist tradition of Sindhi literature with the awakening of contemporary India. Never did a literature owe so much to a visiting poet from a distant corner as did Sindhi literature which was groping for new forms of expression in tune with the changing reality, and even resorting to English literature for its development pattern. The older as well as the younger writers tried their hand in translating Tagore from the available English versions, and the chain reaction moulded the Sindhi literary movement in her third and fourth decades. It was a spontaneous

acceptance of a new literary strain which was overwhelming for its quality of sheer loveliness and stimulating for the new horizons it opened up for discovering the deeper kinship with contemporary India. Tagore brought Sind nearer to India in a subtle manner, and his book *Gora*, gave a political dimension to the new urges in Sindhi literature.

Another conspicuous impact of Tagore's visit in 1923 was on the drama movement which had become moribund for some years after a promising start. Sind had its traditional folk-drama which was rather a *Patpourri* of dance, drama, song and mimicry staged in an all-night performance along the main bazaar by professional *bhagats* venerated as holy men and loved as modern film stars. The modern drama, however, got a spurt under the personal inspiration of Tagore who inaugurated, during his visit, the "Rabindranath Dramatic Club" and witnessed a scene from his play, *Chitra* enacted by young amateurs whom he praised warmly for an excellent performance. One of those actors, Prof. M. U. Malkani, has translated some of Tagore's plays, and he is today the mainstay of the Sindhi literary movement in this country.

The number of Tagore's books translated into Sindhi is comparable to that of almost any other language, though some manuscripts have not been published so far due to obvious difficulties Nonetheless, more translations and even repeat—translations are coming out from time to time The *Gitanjali*, *the Crescent Moon*, *the Gardener and the Fruit-Gathering* were among the first to attract the attention of Sindhi translators and the sole credit for translating from the original Bengali text goes to Arjan Issrani who received his education in Santiniketan. The contrast is refreshing in the extreme and suggests that all future translations ought to be from the Bengali text if the real flavour of Tagore's genius is to be imparted to other languages. All the novels, some essays and articles and at least

five dramas, including *The Post Office* which has been translated twice, now form a part of the Sindhi library. *Urvashi* has been rendered poetically by Narain Shyam and Vasdev Nirmol.

Prominent among other translators are Prof. H. D. Mariwala, Guli Kripalani, Narainin Advani, Jagat Advani, Tirath Basant, Hinduja, Phatan Purswani, Narayan Bharati, Sundri and Uttam. Kala Prakash who has written *Mamta-jun-Labroon* (Waves of Motherhood) has shown to a remarkable extent the influence of Tagore's prose-poem style. Krishin Khatwani, another scholar from Santiniketan has made a distinct contribution to Sindhi short story to which he has imparted a flavour reflecting Tagore's influence over him.

The young, progressive writers have played a vital role in the Sindhi litetary movement for the very survival of the language in the two countries. If their literary output was rather amateurish during the early post-war years, it also reflected for the first time the new writers' awareness of the deeper social reality underlying the growing communal problem. As a departure from the traditional Sufi idealism, it also brought together the younger writers of both communities against the peril threatening the entire Sindhi heritage. They have owned Tagore, though in a different context, as the master artist who abandoned the ivory tower to identify himself with the great, popular upsurges of his times for the achievement of a same and free society.

I have traced this background to show that all the three generations of Sindhi writers during the last half a century have hailed Rabindranath as the source of their literary inspiration and interpreted him, whether in prosperity or adversity, according to the changing reality of each succeeding period. Poet Tagore for the uprooted Sindhi writer today is the inspiring force for seeking identification with the larger aspect of India as she is emerging under the challenge of the post-

freedom problems, particularly of national integration and social growth. It is not surprising that every Sindhi magazine published in this country has brought out this year a special centenary issue in homage to Tagore, and the literary fare provided is of an unusually high order

Across the border where the distinct heritage of Sind has faced a grim challenge, Rabindranath is increasingly looming large as the symbol of an enlightened world outlook. The fanatic who tries to pit Nazrul Islam against Rabindranath in a desperate frenzy, as if poets dedicated to ideals of universal beauty and truth can be resurrected to fight the battles of a foundering ideology, has failed to strike roots in Sindhi literature which has always honoured a poet, be he of the dimension of the mighty Brahamaputra or of a mere Persian well, for quenching the thirst of the soul.

Sheikh Ayaz, presently the most brilliant poet of Sind, recently visited Dacca. Sitting on the bank of the Buri Ganga, he composed the following verses with an anguish of soul

"Moonlight over Buri Ganga
and a sweet breeze blowing ;
Tagore is walking on the shore
and the words are echoing

"Poet, we bow before thee
and kiss thy feet ;
Poet, behold with thy eyes
the ravages of the Kalijuga ;

"Poet, after thy departure
we 've seen such horrors ;
Truth has been hoisted on the gallows
and even Mansur remains silent !"

never failed to regard himself as a citizen of the world. He carried India's message of love and peace to other countries and brought the essence of their culture and their good wishes to us. He was the best exponent of India's mind, heart and culture. His *Visva-Bharati* was *his* creation; the outcome of his sagacity. It was designed *to* "Bring about a true meeting of the East and the West beyond the boundaries of politics and race and creed". When in 1918 he found that as a consequence of the first Great War, peace and order had been disastrously ruined and the spirit of self-centred nationalism had been furiously developed and his endeavours to promote the cause of internationalism were not appreciated either in Japan or in the United States or even in his own country, he realised that political unity could not be achieved until and unless cultural unity had been first achieved and it was in these circumstances that Visva-Bharati came into existence and the progress it has made and the popularity it has gained since 1921 are now attested by Tagore's Birth-centenary celebrations not only here but all over India and abroad — in all civilised countries of the East and the West, irrespective of differences in ideologies in politics. These celebrations are, I think, positive indications of the political unity of the whole world, to achieve which Tagore designed this Visva-Bharati, the World University.

I have come from the Telugu country to speak about the influence of this great world poet and his works on the intellectuals. The cultural movements in Bengal have been always attracting the attention of the literati of my Telugu country from the time of Raja Ram Mohan Roy who started the Renaissance movement in Bengal during the early years of the nineteenth century. As a fervent admirer and an ardent follower of Ram Mohan Roy, Maharshi Devendranath Tagore, the father of our Gurudeva preached the Brahmo Dharma which influenced the minds of his children including Rabindranath

RABINDRANATH AND TELEGU LITERATURE

G V. Sitapati

Gurudéva ! Rabīndranāth ! té
Vimalē Śāntiniketane Sthitām
Bhavadīya dhiyā pratishthitām
Abhivande tava Visva-Bhāratīm

(O Gurudeva ! Rabindranath ! I respectfully salute your Visva-Bharati situated in your pure Santiniketan and permanently endowed with your wisdom)

I have come to this sacred place as a pilgrim to be inspired by the cultural atmosphere left behind by our revered Gurudeva Rabindranath whose centenary celebrations are now held with all devotion and piety here and elsewhere in our country and abroad. By virtue of his versatile greatness as a Visvakavi or world poet, prophet and philosoper, as a play-wright and actor, as a novelist and charming story-teller, as a musician and sweet warbler and as a painter and profound lover of art, beauty, melody, harmony and peace, by virtue of these many-sided activities and manifestations of his genius, Rabindranath endeared himself to almost all the intellectuals, all over the world and as Dr. A. W Trueman of Canada said at the 36th Annual Session of the All-India Bengali Literary Conference in Bombay in connection with Gurudeva's Birthday centenary celebrations, Tagore is regarded as a world figure Very early in his life, he crossed the boundaries of race and language and widened the bases of Indian nationalism. With profound appreciation of the potentialities of his mother-tongue, Bengali and India's classical language, Samskṛt, of the altruistic and universal ideals of the venerable rishis and poets of India, Rabindranath did not repudiate Indian traditions. With the heritage of the righteous, he stood as a symbol of Indian culture. He loved his country as fervently as any other patriot but he

Poet Rabindranath Tagore lives from Bengal to Sind — even today, when man is confronted with the space age with its drastic alternatives. For Tagore there could be no failures and heart-breaks of a politician since his was the spirit of man dreaming of the stars at night and appraising the human reality during the light of the day. The world may have changed a great deal since he passed away, but the challenges it faces today are the same which Tagore felt within his own innermost being — the assertion of human dignity and unity for higher purposes of creative joy. He was of the earth and the sky, and this is precisely the moment in human destiny when his living words would have conveyed a greater meaning of hope and faith, of the deeper comprehension which has become the elemental requirement of the space age for the human survival itself.

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never failed to regard himself as a citizen of the world. He carried India's message of love and peace to other countries and brought the essence of their culture and their good wishes to us. He was the best exponent of India's mind, heart and culture. His Visva-Bharati was his creation, the outcome of his sagacity. It was designed to "Bring about a true meeting of the East and the West beyond the boundaries of politics and race and creed". When in 1918 he found that as a consequence of the first Great War, peace and order had been disastrously ruined and the spirit of self-centred nationalism had been furiously developed and his endeavours to promote the cause of internationalism were not appreciated either in Japan or in the United States or even in his own country, he realised that political unity could not be achieved until and unless cultural unity had been first achieved and it was in these circumstances that Visva-Bharati came into existence and the progress it has made and the popularity it has gained since 1921 are now attested by Tagore's Birth-centenary celebrations not only here but all over India and abroad — in all civilised countries of the East and the West, irrespective of differences in ideologies in politics. These celebrations are, I think, positive indications of the political unity of the whole world, to achieve which Tagore designed this Visva-Bharati, the World University.

I have come from the Telugu country to speak about the influence of this great world poet and his works on the intellectuals. The cultural movements in Bengal have been always attracting the attention of the literati of my Telugu country from the time of Raja Ram Mohan Roy who started the Renaissance movement in Bengal during the early years of the nineteenth century. As a fervent admirer and an ardent follower of Ram Mohan Roy, Maharshi Devendranath Tagore, the father of our Gurudeva preached the Brahmo Dharma which influenced the minds of his children including Rabindranath

and later on of many others in Bengal and other parts of India. Sri R. Venkataratnam Naidu and Rao Bahadur K. Viresalingam Pantulu were the first and foremost in becoming Brahmos and in spreading the Brahmo Dharma in the Telugu country and futher south. They had their inspiration from Maharshi Devendranath Tagore For the first time in my life I heard the charming names of Devendranath Tagore and Rabindranath Tagore in 1894 while I was just a lad of nine years of age and a student of Form I in Rajah's College, Parlakimedi (then still a High School) Sir R Venkataratnam Naidu who had already won the reputation as a good speaker and an ardent Brahmo and Social reformer delivered then a lecture on Brahmo Dharma. I was too young to understand what he then said, but the delivery of his speech with rhythmical cadence and metallic tone and the repeated mention of the names of Devendranath and Rabindranath kindled in me the ardent desire to know who they were. I was later on attending the Sunday meetings of the Brahmo Samaj which was started in 1897. Rao Bahadur K. Viresalingam Pantulu is regarded as the founder of the modern age in Telugu literature, as a devoted social reformer along with Venkataratnam Naidu and as the promoter of widow-marriages and education for women. All this work relating to religious and social reform was the result of the inspiration he had from Devendranath Tagore Viresalingam was a prolific writer in Telugu He was almost the first to inaugurate the new trends in modern Telugu literature but no trace of Rabindranath's influence is visible in any of his writings — either prose or poetry We can easily account for it. During the palmy days of the literary activity of Viresalingam Pantulu, the literary productions of Rabindranath who was younger by fourteen years were not noticed by him or by any other Telugu scholar and by the time Rabindranath came to prominence, Viresalingam's literary career came

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to a close and he died in 1919. Moreover the time was not ripe for Telugu scholars to appreciate Rabindranath's innovations in thought and expression. It was not until it was announced that the Noble Prize for Literature was to be awarded to Rabindranath in 1913 that his name or works came to be known to the Telugu public. There were, of course, honourable exceptions. Guruzada Venkata Apparao (1861-1914) who had already come to prominence as the author of a social drama known as Kanyasulkam and some short poems came into contact with Rabindranath in 1912. Apparao may be regarded as the first to acquaint us with Rabindranath's poetic talents. My father, Gidugu Venkata Ramamurti and Guruzada Venkata Apparao had been then carrying on revolt against the enforcement of the out-of-date so called classical Telugu on students of schools and colleges. It is said that innovators should either start early or live long. Both Apparao and my father started late and Apparao died too early in 1915 in his 54th year but my father lived long enough to achieve success. By the time he died in 1940 hundreds of Telugu writers had written novels, short stories and essays in racy idiomatic and spoken Telugu. During the second and the third decades of the twentieth century he had the good wishes and inspiration from Rabindranath, communicated to him through friends like K. Vaikuntha Rao and Dr. Suniti Kumar Chatterjee who had been fortunate enough to come into personal contact with Gurudeva.

Apparao's drama had been written before he came into contact with Gurudeva but Gurudeva's influence on Apparao is visible in his lyrical songs and his short poems Though it may be said that Apparao as a poet was a pygmy before Visvakavi, Rabindranath, the intellectual giant, there are poetic flashes in the few poems he could compose during the last years of his short life. Referring to parochial patriotism and nationalism during the first decade of the twentieth century he said,

Blow not thy trumpet indiscreet :
    "I love my country sweet"
Do thou and show a deed renowned
    Give up the bragging sound
From gain of thine allot thy mite
    To help thy neighbour's plight
By country is meant not earth nor mud
    But men of flesh and blood

The following lines of Apparao have inspired the progressive writers of the present age .

Our land is a huge and mighty tree :
    It should abound in flowers of love
Couched and perched among the leaves
    The Cuckoo of Muse should warble sweet
With nourishing melodies ; our country should sprout
    Affections strong and sweet

I am sorry that my translation does not adequately represent the melody of the original.

Prominent among the Telugu poets and scholars who had the fortune of either Gurukulavasa or stay at Santiniketan are Rayaprolu Subbarao, Mallavarapu Visweswararao, Dr Bezawada, Gopala Reddy, Abburi Ramakrishnarao, Karumari Vaikuntharao and Jonnalagadda Satyanarayana. Of these, Rayaproluy Subbarao had the poetic talent even before he came into contact with Gurudeva, and came back with a fresh awakening and inspired by Gurudeva, Subbarao composed his lyrics which exhibit his insight into Prakriti (Nature) and love for Madhura bhakti or pure love. Mallavarapu produced adoptations of a few lyrics of Gurudeva Dr. Gopala Reddi translated Gurudeva's *Chitra* and a number of short plays and poems under the captain of "Rabindra

Sahityam". His Telugu rendering of "*Kalidasa*" and "*Smaraṇa*" which Rabindranath composed in memory of Mṛnālānī Devi, his wife who died in 1902 are said to be very faithful translations. To me and others who do not know Bengali, his translations are helpful guides to understand the great poetical talent of Tagore. Kārumūri Vaikuntha Rao had very good acquaintance with Bengali and read to me some poems of Rabindranath in Bengali and I could understand them with my knowledge of Sanskrit and his interpretation of pure Bengali expressions. Unfortunately Vaikuntharao was not a good Telugu writer but with the help of his Telugu friends he translated *Home and Abroad and Gṛhapravesam.* Jonnalagaḍḍa Satyanarayana is a prolific Telugu prose writer and has considerable knowledge of Bengali. He has translated into Telugu several works of Bengali literature written by Bankim, D. L. Roy and Rabindranath.

It will be audacious and supererogatory on my part if even I attempt to speak about the merits of Rabindranath's works because I am ignorant of Bengali and the few works I read are only translations from the original either into English or into Telugu. I am not fortunate enough to read and understand even a single line in Bengali without help from friends.

There are among modern Telugu poets many who have been inspired by Rabindranath's works but they have had to depend upon English translations. It is not possible to bring out all the nuances of the original in a foreign language however rich it may be. What is worse · distortions also occur, and when such a translation is further translated into another language, the distorted infant becomes a monster. There are for example about six translations of Gitanjali in Telugu — all from the English version and none from the original Bengali. The latest is done by Bommakanṭi Venkata Singaracharya. A scholarly introduction to this translation is written by Abburi

Ramakrishnarao who has acquired considerable knowledge of Bengali and read and understood the original text. The points he mentions in it are very interesting in this connection. In a short time after Rabindranath received the Nobel prize, the first translation of Gitanjali into Telugu by Ādipudi Somanatharao was published. Divakarla Tirupati Sastry, one of the twin-poets along with Chellapilla Venkata Sastry, the first poet laureate of Andra Pradesh read it and when Rayaprolu Subbarao and Abburi Ramakrishnarao happened to meet him, Tirupati Sastry remarked, "You say Rabindranath is a great poet but I find no poetic merit to justify your praise". They then said "you have read the Telegu translation of the English version of the Original in Bengali. You cannot, therefore, appreciate the poetic merit of Rabindranath". Abburi Ramakrishnarao cites a few examples to illustrate the unhappy distortions that occur in translations of translations.

"Shējē Pāshē Eshē Bōshē Chhilō Tabu Jāginī
Kī Ghūm Tōrē Pēyē Chhilo Hatabhāginī"

(Gitanjali—p. 72)

This was rendered by a previous translator as "When my friend came and called to me from the threshold I did not respond. How unfortunate I am !"

Singaracharya's translation reads better — "Even when my friend came and sat on my bed I had been thus sleeping How ill-fated I am !". Just one more example to illustrate similar distortions :—

Amār Ey Path Chalātēy Ānanda
Khēlē Jāy Raudra Chhāyā Varshā Āsē Vasanta.

(Gītimalya—p. 11)

The English version is :—

"This is my delight thus to wait and watch at the way-side where shadow chases light and the rain comes in the wake of summer"

Gudipāti Venkatāchalam rendered this as—

"The place where darkness drives away light, where the ra approaches by chasing summer ; it is my delight to sit by th wayside watching".

Singarachari's translation reads thus —

"The place where light and shadow and summer and ra sport ; it is my '*Vratam*' to stand on the way and look for".

Vratam is used in the place of ānand in the original. Wh ever vratam may mean (either vow or resolve or rite or act) it is not a happy word for ānand.

Poets like Ramakrishnarao and Rayaprolu have not ventu to translate Rabindranath's poems with all their knowledge Bengali because they are afraid that they cannot do full just to the original. Some think that the essence of the origi can be brought out in the translation but that can be done or by one who is proficient in both the languages. It mu however, be admitted that the pleasure we experience reading the original cannot be had by reading the translati which only gives us the essence ; just as the pleasure chewing a piece of sugarcane cannot be had by drinking juice, although that is the essence of the cane.

There are yet Telugu poets whose minds are steeped in t static time-honoured traditions and poetic canons to whc Tagore's poetry fails to appeal, but their number is on t decline. There are poets of eminence, who inspired by Tagor works have composed original poems which are mostly lyric Tallavajjhala Siva Sankara Sastri's Hrdayesvari, a romantic poe and Avedana containing inspiring verses have won the appr ciation of Telugu readers. One of the sweetest warblers amo the Telugu Poets is Devulapalli Krishna Sastry whose Krishn paksham and Urvasi are very popular. Nanduri Subbarac Yenki patalu (songs) represent the pure romantic affairs

the unsophisticated peasants. Adavi Bapiraju was an artist and lyrical poet , his poems and songs exhibit his profound love for whatever is beautiful and charming in Nature. Basavarazu Apparao's poems are known for melody and inspiring thoughts. Aetiological myths and folkstories lent themes to some poets. Visvanatham Satyanarayana's Kinnerasani (a river damsel) contains charming descriptions : "the brook, a love-lorn damsel descends from the top of a hill with a jingling sound and meanders with a dancing pose". The cult of Madhura Bhakti appealed to several poets ; the twin-poets Venkata Parvatisvara Kavulu, the Votaries of this cult composed Ekanta seva in which the Jivatma's eagerness to unite with Paramatma is shown to be like the love-sick woman's quest for her lover.

Nature appealed to the classical as well as to the modern poets in Telugu but there is difference in their approach That of the classical poets is realistic and objective while that of the modern poets is idealistic, subjective and emotional. *I think that in this respect Rabindranath had his inspiration from* Kalidasa's Meghaduta and the modern Telugu poets from both of them. I am only a versifier and not a poet either in Telugu or in Sanskrit but when I read Tagore's descriptions of Nature, I composed a sloka :

Yadaham Pasyami Prakriti Vibhavam Bharata Tale
Himadreragram Ma Mavanata Gate Rudgamayati
Samudro Drshtva Ma Mupadisati Gambhira Kavitam
Madiyam Hit Padmam Vikasati Rabindramsu Kalitam".

Modern Telugu poets, inspired by Rabindranath's profound love for Nature, find in Narure, sympathetic response to their emotions As Rayaprolu Subbarao once said they worship Nature as the visible God like the unsophisticated primitive people and the votaries of Surya-cult Subbarao himself is a worshipper of Nature He bows to his Lord Cuckoo before he commences to sing his melodies Srirangam Srinivasa Rao

(popularly known as Sri Sri) looks upon Nature in his Prakrti Gita with immense delight. The mighty rivers of the Telugu country — the Godavari, the Krishna and the Tungabhadra have inspired the modern poets to sing in praise of them. Krishnasastry's song "O ! Meghamāla" is very frequently sung by girls with great delight.

The story-poems of the modern poets are not mere narratives. They contain elevated thoughts and messages to humanity. A new interpretation of incidents, persons and gods noticed in the Ramayana and the Mahabharata is given by some modern poets sometimes in a bewildering manner. Paulastya hrdayam (the heart of Ravana) by Katuri Venkateswararao is a good poem with fine sentiments. Saundaranandam by the twin-poets, Pingali Lakshmi Kantam and Kātūri Venkaieswararao shows how, inspired by the great Buddha, the carnal love of Nanda (the step-brother of the Buddha) and his wife Sundari was changed into the spiritual love for the humanity. The modern poets do not generally attempt lengthy story poems but select an interesting incident or a hero from the Puranic Itihasas and express their reactions. Siva Sankara Sastry selected for his theme Lopamudra of the Vedic lore and composed a short poem, in which Lopamudra eager to fall into the arms of her lord, Agastya who was always in "tapas" addresses him with an entreaty :—

How queer is this ! though long I smile
And wait to have thy grace
Thou liftest not thy head a-while
To show thy lovely face !

Duvvuri Rami Reddy and Kavikondala Venkatarao are fine pastoral poets ; the former now no more maintain the classical style in language and treat and the latter resorts to the spoken dialect.

For about thirty years from 1917 poets were generally inspired

by Mahatma Gandhi rather than by Rabindranath. They produced nationalistic and patriotic poetry. Garimella Satyanarayana's song "Mokoddī tella doratanam" meaning "we don't want this white Government" moved the hearts of all over the Telugu country in 1920-21. Even old poets like Sripada Krishnamurthi Sastry, the second Andhra Poet-laureate burst in verses in support of the Freedom struggle The Abhyudaya or progressive poet next came in wake of the patriots with an aggressive spirit to combat tyranny not only in politics but also in society, religion, language and literature. Sri Sri, their leader says in a mixed dialect of English and Telugu :—

"Charlie Chaplin Joseph Stalin
Walt Disney, George Hugnet
Greta Garbo, Pirandello
Iṭīvala mā inspiration
"Sigmund Freud, Harold Lloyd
Albert Einstein, Jacob Epstein
Haron Chatto Gi-Rammurti
Itīvala mā inspiration

Sri Sri endeavours to destroy the old order of life, the out-of-date conventions, customs and traditions An ardent and even a hectic desire to build a new world is the main-spring for his poetry.

The progress of Juvenile literature of the modern type has been the result of Tagore's influence on the intellectuals of our country Folklore and juvenile literature were not recognised as part of standard literature by either the Pundits or the Educational authorities until their importance was stressed by Rabindranath through his writings and speeches and until his poems and stories were published. I was one of the earliest to start the composition of short poems and stories for children in 1909-10 I was then inspired not by Tagore's compositions but by the Nursery rhymes, the Boys' Own Annuals etc, in

English. I had then no encouragement from the Educational authorities or the elders because I composed my poems and songs in the language of children. But children read and recited them with great delight when they were published in Vivekavati, a journal edited by a lady of the Canadian Baptist Mission. Later one, Chinta Dikshitulu, a more talented writer for children composed several poems and short stories. Many writers have come into the field. During the last ten years rapid progress has been made. Journals like Bala and Chandamama have in wide circulation. The Central and State Governments have evinced great interest in the progress of Juvenile literature by organising literary workshops to train authors in the technique of writing for children and I had the honour of being appointed a Director of those workshops once at Rajahmundy and another at Hyderabad. The State and Central Governments have also instituted annual prizes for the best books for children. Educational institutions have also evinced considerable interest in the collection of Janapada Geyams (folk-songs). Dr. B. Rama Raju was awarded the Ph. D., Degree by the Osmania University, Hyderabad for his thesis on Janapada Geyas in 1959.

Dr. S. Radhakrishnan has not unfortunately chosen to contribute to Telugu Literature but has rendered great service to the progress of education and culture not only in Andhra but also in India and abroad. His Philosophy of Rabindranath is the best commentary we have on the cultural and spiritual background of the literary productions of Gurudeva. Dr. Radhakrishnan is like Gurudeva a world figure, a a great Philosopher and the best exponent of the Indian philosophy. He is never tired of saying what he said the other day at Masulipatam while replying to a civic address presented to him by the Masulipatam Municipal Council. He said "Our country has a great tradition. We loudly proclaim to the

world about our ancient traditions and achievements But to-day we have forgotten what our scriptures had taught us...The essence of our tradition could be summed up in one word, namely "tat tvam asi" implying that there should not be any distinction among mankind. There should be only one race". He said that if India had to recapture her ancient glory the people should cast away distinctinctions of caste and creed and personal animosity and get out of the "mental prison-house" in which they lived to-day.

Gurudeva went further to bring about the cultural unity of the world, to achieve which he instituted this mighty institution of Visva-Bharati It was also his aim to bring about world peace and world unity But where are we now ? I once said referring to the discrepancy between our words and deeds—

"United we should always be".
In public meetings so we preach
But every two have parties three
One for both and one for each.

We know the adages of sages but the savage ego in us keeps us in the mental prison-houses, disunited Universal Brotherhood cannot be had overnight by mere chanting the names These qualities can be acquired by Sadhana and constant chastening of the mind. World unity and peace cannot be had unless all major states unite because the strength of the chain is the weakest link.

The best homage that can be ever paid to Gurudeva is to act up to his ideal and realise his object.

RABINDRANATH AND HINDI LITERATURE

HAZARIPRASAD DWIVEDI

WHEN Rabindranath Tagore was born in 1861, modern Hindi literature was still in its infancy. The printing press was introduced some half a century earlier; a few journals were published from Calcutta, Banaras and other places; some Sanskrit works were translated or adapted and a few text books were written. But the traditional Brajbhāshā poetry was still dominant and the modern ideas were very little known. The real founder of modern Hindi literature, Bhartendu Harishchandra, was at that time a boy of hardly eleven, but during a short span, he initiated a powerful movement of cultural renaissance, which was both dynamic and profound. He possessed a quality of leadership, being at the same time versatile, generous, courageous and soft-hearted. His devotion to the cause which he sponsored was sincere and sound. No wonder that a group of powerful writers, commonly described as the writers of Bhartendu Mandal, whose contribution to the budding Khari Boli literature was 'substantial in quality, varied in content, universal in appeal and compelling in tone, if not always flawless in quality' gathered around him. Bhartendu, the leader of this socio-cultural literary movement, died at the age of 34 in 1884, but the 'Mandal' carried his banner with zeal till the end of the nineteenth century—undaunted, untired, and almost with a missionary fervour. Most of the writers had some acquaintance with English literature and made attempts to introduce some new forms—poems, plays, farces, skits, polemical tracts, critical and humorous essays in simple, unsophisticated and effective language There were some attempts to write novels, though not very successfully; essays of a whimsical nature, however, were freely written

The importance of this movement which went on undismayed till the end of the last century should not be judged by the

quality of the literature it produced, but by its powerful cultural impact on life and also by the genuine desire of these writers to infuse a new spirit into the Hindi speaking people. Rabindranath was not known to Bhartendu, he being only twentytwo at the time of his death Bhartendu knew Bengali and had translated or adapted some works originally written in that language. The Bengali language was the main source through which western influence was imbibed by modern Hindi literature during this period. A few essays and some novels were translated from Bengali by the end of this period, but the dominant taste was for fiction, specially that of Bankim Chandra, Calcutta, at that time was as we know the capital and the centre of English studies. It was, therefore, quite natural that the writers of this age looked at Bengal for inspiration Rabindranath, being primarily a poet, did not attract much notice Poetry, due to its peculiar nature permeates more slowly than fiction. With the turn of the nineteenth century, contact of Hindi writers with English literature gradually became direct, and with a growing acquaintance with English language they began to enrich their writings with western works. This contact developed and became more intimate and Russian and French fiction, through the medium of English, attracted the young Hindi writers Bengali fiction, with the exception of Sarat Chandra, became less known.

Dr. Shyamsundar Das with the help of an organisation named the Kashi Nagari Pracharini Sabha and Pandit Mahavir Prasad Dwivedi with the powerful medium of 'Saraswati' appeared on the scene

In the later half of the nineteenth century Hindi developed as a language of protest The British Government in 1837 gave recognition to Persianized Urdu as the official language replacing Persian, and consequently ignored Hindi, which was understood by a vast majority of people and Deva Nagari

which was a more perfect script. The Hindus, already oppressed through ages, felt hurt. Even after the great fight for freedom of 1857, when Queen Victoria took over the reign of administration in her hands, the aspirations of the Hindus were not fulfilled. This promoted a powerful reaction and Hindi became more and more a language of remonstrance. For historical reasons this was some what inevitable. The British policy of "dvide and rule" increasingly deepened this reaction. The Arya Samaj, a powerful socio-religious revivalist movement gathered momentum and reinforced the aspirations of the Hindi-loving people. It declared Hindi as Arya Bhasha, the language of the Aryans. With the rise of the Arya Samaj, the communal consciousness became more and more active which, in its turn, further intensified the outlook of the North Indian Hindus and the reaction became stronger.

The Arya Samaj, though primarily a revivalist movement advocated Reason and rational thinking. Reason is supposed to have certain autonomy in seeking truth. Fused with the spirit of liberal education, the revivalist movement gradually tended to be a kind of cultural liberalism. All this made Hindi more liberal in outlook but highly self-conscious The reaction against Persianized Urdu became stronger. The Bengali language of this period was highly Sanskritized. Naturally this style of the language attracted Hindi writers. Bengali books were translated indiscriminately and the Sanskritized style was adopted at the cost of simplicity and expressive quality of the language. The advocacy of Sanskritized Hindi was consequently ridiculed and its artificiality disparaged, but the original reaction was so powerful that it could not be checked until after the first world war when modern Hindi literature came to its own.

In the beginning of the twentieth century Rabindranath was not much known outside Bengal. Even though he was born and bred in the atmosphere of the so-called Hindu nationalism

of Bengal, he was not much influenced by it in any marked measure. His deep study of the Upanishadic teachings and Indian classical poets like Kalidas, Bana Bhatta on the one hand and the great romantic English poets like Wordsworth, Byron, Shelley, Keats and Browning on the other shaped him into something more than a sentimental Hindu nationalist writer. The family in which he was born was very liberal, full of national pride and self respect, but far from cheap ostentation. He inherited depth of feeling, self respect, modesty and generosity. 'I had been blessed', says he, "with the sense of wonder which gives a child his right of entry to the treasure-house of mystery in the depth of existence". When he became known in the Hindi-speaking area, he was already a consummate artist Pandit Mahabir Prasad Dwivedi brought out the translation of his essays, stories and poems in his monthly Saraswati which was published by the Indian press of Allahabad The creative work of Mahavir Prasad Dwivedi will not be considered today of very high order, but his devotion, integrity and indefatigable zeal established him as an architect of modern Hindi prose Like Bhartendu Harishchandra he also gathered a group of great writers about him Maithili Sharan Gupta, the renowned Khari Boli poet, was one of them. 'Saraswati' started a campaign against the use of Braja Bhasha for poetry, as the conventional vehicle, and advocated the use of Khari Boli for both prose and poetry.

It is difficult to say how far acquaintance with Rabindranath's achievements in Bengali literature was responsible for this healthy movement, but in the course of controversy he was frequently quoted by those who advocated the use of Khari Boli for poetry also. Rabindranath was cited as saying that the language of common use should be made the vehicle of poetic diction. The Khari Boli movement finally emerged triumphant and its advocates achieved their goal.

The writers of the '*Dwivedi Mandal*' were successful only in changing the linguistic pattern. So far as the subject matter was concerned they were free from convention in a limited sense. There was hardly anything like 'a spontaneous outburst of personal feeling', which is regarded as the key-note of English romantic poetry. The subject matter was taken from those aspects of Indian history which satisfied the national pride and sentiment of the glorious past. At their best they were more rhetorical than poetic in their achievements. The creator of poetic discourse is concerned primarily with influencing it. The end that the creator of poetic discourse seeks to achieve is the stimulation of the spirit and imagination of the receiver. He endeavours to divert, quicken and enthrall. The end that the creator of rhetorical discourse seeks to achieve with his audience is belief or action. He makes an effort to instruct, impress, persuade or convince. The authors of '*Dwivedi Mandal*' were propounders of the rhetorical discourse in this sense. Rabindranath's poetic achievements had little to do with this versification.

Rabindranath is no doubt a poet, but he is something more than that. We can not understand him by using commonplace words like poet, musician, humanist, artist, etc., Words have their connotation in the mind of the receiver. Sometimes we say what we do not understand, we understand what we do not mean. All these words have different concepts with different persons. Rabindranath is an artist according to his own description, 'What is art?' he asks and gives the following answer "it is the response of man's creative soul to the call of the Real"...He explains it further in the following manner; "we can make truth ours by actively modulating its inter-relations. This is the work of art; for reality is not based on the substance of things but on the principle of relationship. Truth is the infinite, pursued by metaphysics;

fact is the finite, pursued by science, while reality is the definition of the infinite which relates truth to the person Reality is human; it is what we are conscious of by which we are affected, that which we express. When we are intensely aware of it, we are aware of ourselves and it gives us delight. We live in it, we always widen its limits Our arts and literature represent this creative activity which is fundamental in man." Thus, Rabindranath is an artist in this universal sense. It is difficult to imitate such an artist. He is neither a lover of Nature nor that of man as is generally understood. He is a lover of the Real, which gives us the testimony of the great whole which is the complete and final truth of man. "It offers us the immense field where we can have our release from the sole monarchy of hunger, of the growling voice, snarling teeth and tearing claws, from thy dominance of the limited material means, the source of cruelty, envy and ignoble deception, where the largest wealth of the human soul has been produced through sympathy and co-operation; through disinterested pursuit of knowledge that recognizes no limit and is unafraid of all time-honoured taboos; through a strenuous cultivation of intelligence for service that knows no distinction of colour and clime The spirit of Love, dwelling in the boundless realm of the surplus, emancipates our consciousness from the illusory bond of the separateness of self; it is ever trying to spread its illumination in the human world".

He believes in a universal rhythm of music; whatever is in tune with this grand music is beautiful, whatever is not, is ugly "This rhythm of harmony has been extracted from its usual concrete context, and exhibited through the medium of sound. And thus the pure essence of expressiveness in existence is offered in music. Expressiveness finds the least resistance in sound, having freedom unencumbered by the

burden of facts and thoughts. This gives it a power to arouse in us an intimate feeling of reality."

This aspect of majestic personality penetrates directly into the inner reality of the soul. Rabindranath inspires, enthralls, moves and stirs. No wonder the creative minds around him responded profoundly to this inspiration. Imitators there were, but they did not matter. He touched the innermost creative process in poets and artists throughout our country. He is a poet of poets, artist of artists. Here lies the greatness of Rabindranath ; (neither in the number of translated works nor in superfluous attempts at imitation.)

When Rabindranath was declared a Nobel laureate in 1913 he became widely respected by literary men throughout India. His works were translated into Hindi, generally from Bengali and sometimes from their English versions. So far translations were limited to Bengali romances, hardly touching the real wider literary genius of talented writers. During the first world war period the atmosphere was rather disturbed. But there is ample evidence that these years of apparent stalemate were preparing a rich soil for the growth of literary activity. Two major literary movements were taking shape in Hindi during the inter-war period — One confined only to poetry and the other covering the vast field of other literary forms. The poetic movement which was later on described as Chhāyāvād, was primarily a romantic movement, aesthetic in spirit and subjective in character. There was a revolt against the traditional forms, conventional metres, superimposed literary taboos and lifeless motives. The poet for the first time tried to look at reality from his own angle. Rabindranath's poems and essays had touched the inner spirit of the real genius of Hindi. One remark of Tagore about the ignored women characters of Sanskrit literature inspired epic like *Sakota* of Maithili Sharan Gupta and Urmila Bala Krishna Sharma Navin.

Nirala, a poet of stature, who was brought up and educated in Bengal, held high the banner of revolt. He translated some poems of Tagore and he was deeply drunk of Rabindranath's literary genius. I should not be misunderstood here. Nirala is by no means, an imitator or a carbon copy of Rabindranath. He is something different, but his creative genius was deeply stirred by Rabindranath's poetical works. Another major poet Siya Ram Sharan Gupta had also thoroughly studied the works of Rabindranath. Ray Krishna Das's wonderful rhythmic Gadya Gita (prose songs) passesses the peculiar flavour of Tagore's writing. Rabindranath's real contribution thus lies in stirring the soul of the sensitive writers. This is the genuine influence which is far deeper than borrowings or lifeless imitation. Life influences life, in a living way, as a vital assimilating force.

There were many other factors which were giving shape to the new spirit in literature. The English romantic poets were also capturing the imagination of the young poets ; the powerful national movement of freedom from foreign rule which was affecting the nation, 'politically, culturally and spiritually' ; the evergrowing evidence of India's glorious past ,—all these added to the strength of the new literary movement. Jayshankar Prasad's deep love for the cultural past and his intellectual approach to the mystery of Nature were the product of this movement. The joyful ecstasy of Sumitranand Pant and Mahadevi's spiritual probe into the yearning of human soul deeply stirred the creative genius of Hindi poets. All these poets had at least a nodding acquaintance with Tagore's works. It is rather difficult to say in which aspect they were influenced by them. Influenced they were undoubtedly, but like all living organic assimilation, it is very difficult to ascertain the degree of influence. Prem Chand and Ram Chandra Shukla are the only important figures in this period who were more or

less unaffected by Tagore in this period. Tagore's novels and short stories were widely read ; but Hindi fiction was not much affected by this aspect of Tagore's genius. Prem Chand, the pioneer of literary Hindi fiction changed over quietly from Urdu to Hindi in the post-first-world-war period and dominated the field of fiction. His deep sympathy with the oppressed humanity and his realistic approach to the social evils, leading to their ideal solution, attracted the younger generation of writers. The historical plays of Jayshankar Prasad, tinged with cultural glory and his rational approach to the forgotten past, caught the attention of readers. Jainendra Kumar a thought-provoking novelist, however, has in his *Sunita* some touch of Tagore's well-known novel *Gahare-Bahire*. The new sociological approach to the problems of social emancipation of man became all powerful. Yashpal, Agyeya, Ashk, Bhagawati Charan Verma accepted the challenge of the age in their own way. Rabindranath's writings did not affect these trends in literature. But in the field of poetry the influence is still alive. *Urvashi* written by Dinakar reveals traces of, the heartening influence of Rabindranath's poem like *Urvashi* and *Patita*. Dinakar has developed the theme in an entirely new way ; but the evidence of his inspiration from Rabindranath can be seen and felt.

It is an impossible job to explore and discover Rabindranath's influence on literature by citing stray poems torn from their contexts or by re-counting the endless series of his works and articles. The greatest service that Rabindranath has rendered to Hindi literature is that he has emboldened it to the realisation of its distinctive existence, contribution and mission and taught it to stand on its own legs. His powerful and prodigally generous personality has instilled courage and self-reliance in the younger generations of Hindi litterateurs ; they are not haunted by feelings of an imaginary inferiority complex which

obsessed their predecessors. Hindi has even been fully conscious that Rabindranath wrote originally in his mother tongue and not in English. With a self-discerning eye, Hindi scholars began to explore and perceive the potentialities as well as the actualities of the merit of their own language and the mood to imitate almost completely vanished. Today Hindi literature is following the distinctive evolution of its own life-force and has that integral and vital self-consciousness which is infinitely more valuable than all the literary conventions of the past. The future will witness the appearance of bright luminaries in Hindi literature, but it will ever be gratefully remembered that Rabindranath Tagore helped to propagate this new consciousness and new vision. The one unique quality of this towering genius has been that while it influenced a literature, it did not dominate or eclipse innate originality; it only roused its own life-force, fostered its own inner growth; and so it was that under his benign and invigorating influence, Hindi cast off the slough of diffidence and determined to take up its share in the gradual building up of a regenerate India.

RABINDRANATH AND KANNADA LITERATURE

ADYA RANGACHARYA

MODERN Kannada Literature, like other modern Indian literatures, developed, from the middle of the 19th Century, under the influence of English literature. Starting with books of Mill, Herbert Spencer and similar writers the enthusiasm of the pioneer Kannada-educated finally reached Shakespeare. Here and there were sporadic attempts, sometimes patronised by ruling chiefs, to go back to classical Sanskrit for inspiration. This latter was more a reaction than an inner urge. It was not till 1905, the year of Bengal partition, that literature was felt to be a creation of the soil rather than a transplantation. When Indian patriotism was awakened, the Kannada writers had to turn to some Indian source of inspiration. Classical Sanskrit, for the reason that for centuries it was a close preserve of a few pundits, was unable to satisfy the patriotic urge. Inevitably Kannada turned to two modern Indian literatures, viz. the neighbouring Marathi, the language of Lokamanya Tilak and Bengali, the contemporary heart of the newly awakened partiotism.

From 1905 to 1920, two writers held the field of Kannada literature almost to themselves ; a big class of readers came into existence because of these two writers ; both were novelists. One of them was B. Venkatachar of Mysore who translated Bengali novels of Bankim Chandra and the other V. T. Kulkarni (or Galagnath as he was popularly known) who translated Marathi novels of Hari Narayan Apte. These novels, whether historical or otherwise, conveyed a hidden message, and depicted a secretive atmosphere of patriotism. Though a number of college-educated youngsters were still under the glamour of English literature, these translations from Bengali and Marathi awakened, for the first time, a consciousness that here is something, of our own of which we can be proud and, in addition,

which we could understand and appreciate. The society pictured in the *Vicar of Wakefield* and *Pride and Prejudice* could never be as intimate as that of Anandamath or of Ishwari Sutra

The Gandhian era that started in 1920 entirely changed the course of modern Kannada literature On the one hand, it made us feel proud of our heritage inspite of its defects and drawbacks and, on the other, it inculcated in us an honesty of purpose and a sense of true values by which we could no longer feel ashamed to admit a good thing even if it were not our own. In other words, along with a sense of national patriotism, a sense of universal brotherhood was also beating in our hearts. It was in this mood of its development that Kannada writers felt the influence of Rabindranath Tagore Here was an Indian patriot who had joined the processions by coming and shouting slogans during the Partition movement and who, at the same time, translated his works into English and was then awarded the Nobel prize. The preaching of Mahatmaji viz. hate the British rule but at the same time love the British people, this preaching was, so to say, personified by the Acharya of Santiniketan. And, for once, the Kannada writers applied the Swadeshi movement to literature by turning for inspiration to a Swadeshi poet.

The first name deserving to be mentioned in this context is that of the late Sri A. Lakshmanrao, popularly known as Hoysala, who published in 1921, a small collection of poems called "*Tirugu Murugu*". Hoysala had been to Santiniketan and his poems for children were directly influenced by his association with Rabindranath and his acquaintance with the Bengali language By 1925 a number of young Kannadigas had gone to study at Santiniketan The influence of Tagore, his writing and his personality, spread from group to group. Even established writers were moved to read Tagore either through Bengali or through English translations. A translation of Tagore's essays in criticism of Indian literature, from the

original, was published by the late Sri T. S. Venkannayya of Mysore; earlier Sri N. V. Kuradi of Dharwar had published translations of a few poems of Gitanjali from the English rendering; for the English-educated youngsters the monthly Modern Review, regularly publishing Tagore's translations into English, became popular reading. The late Sri M. N. Kamat, a teacher in North Kanara, translated *Post-Office* and some other plays of Tagore. Inspired by an article of Tagore on "Characters of Ramayana treated indifferently by Valmiki", a poetic short play under the name *Tapaswini* was written by Smt. 'Bharati' (Tirumale Rajamma).

But it was in poetry that Tagore's influence was to be felt more intimately. In Dharwar Sri D. R. Bendre who first wrote the patriotic Krishna Kumari in traditional metre became the centre of a group of youngsters—all bursting with poetry. It is more than a coincidence that a number from these youngsters had joined Visva-Bharati for study, study which came under the denomination of National Education since these young men had boycotted the regular schools in the wake of the non-co-operation movement. But this band of yougsters, under the leadership of Sri D. R. Bendre and calling themselves Geleyara Gumpu (Friends' Circle), wrote poetry and wrote it to begin with under the distinct influence of Tagore. Old metres were discarded; kavyas and mahakavyas were not favoured; on the other hand, love and patriotism were the two sentiments that inspired the short lyrical poems of these writers. It would not be surprising if the young poets themselves were not conscious of this influence; otherwise, the poems could not have been inspiring to the readers as well. No more were the style and subject borrowed from Shelley or Milton. Some poets selected episodes from Ramayana or Mahabharata like the story of Shabari by Shri Betgeri Krishna Sharma (Anandakanda); sometimes it was

directly a story or an idea of Tagore that set the spark as in the case of a sweet, little poem called Abhisara by Shri Sali Ramachandra Rao Years later Shri Naregal Prakash translated portions of Gitanjali from the original Bengali

In the meanwhile Shri Bendre himself, more sensitive and imaginative than all others, had evolved a new method for himself If in the early days he was satisfied to make mere variations in old metres, he now found that he had something new to convey and this could not be done by mere variations in length or rhyme. Even the language had to change. And so we find him, as in Tagore's case, going to the language and music of folk-literature In simple words he expressed sublime ideas and words moved with a lilt and music In some poems like *Hakki Harutide Nodidira*—"See how the bird flies" the influence of Tagore is discernible in the symbolism of the Bird standing for Time Apart from Shri Bendre, a younger poet from Mysore had come directly under the influence of Tagore This young poet, Shri K V. Puttappa, wrote a verse-play called *Chitrangada*, on the model and inspiration of Tagore's play of the same name Shri Puttappa, in his lyrics, reveals more distinctly the influence of Tagore. Often, we find in Sri Puttappa's verse-plays lines and ideas of Tagore but expressed with a natural force Side by side with these two poets mention may be made of the late Shri Madhura Chenna who not only translated Tagore's play *Sacrifice* but was more directly influenced in his lyrical poems Introspection and spiritual quest were, for the first time and in Tagore's style, the distinctive features of Madhura Chenna's lyrics

It should be noted that not all of those writers mentioned knew Bengali Even some of these who translated or adopted Tagore's works did it from the English translation. Nobody knew or even worried about the style in the original But the prose-poem style of many of the English renderings definitely

captivated some of the writers. Even senior writers like Bendre and Betgeri adopted the style for writing what may be called prose-poem lyrics. The fact that from the 12th Century A. D. Veerashaiva mystics of Karnatak had used that style added a sense of regional patriotism to such writings. Even a younger writer called Ananda (Shri A. Seetaram) who, it is interesting to note, wrote good short stories used this style with effect in his Pakshigana. By 1930, Karnatak had a number of younger writers like Shri Narayan Sangam, Krishnakumar Kallur, Shesha Rulkarni and others who had lived in Santiniketan for studies and returned home. The fact that many of these wrote some lyrics and more short stories speaks for itself.

The foregoing is no more than a bold, unstudied experience of one who has been a contemporary of many of these writers. No scholar has made any study of the development of modern Kannada literature nor is the writer aware of any study of modern Indian literatures in their relation to each other. The personality of Rabindranath Tagore was so outstanding that his influence could be detected even by a casual student. It is not only in literature but even in other aspects that this influence worked. As early as the second decade of this century the late Sri M. N. Kamat attempted to run an educational institution on the lines of Santiniketan. The late Pundit Taranath who conducted an Ashram at Tungabhadra was influenced by the 'Visva-Bharati' spirit, a harmonious blend of nationalism and internationalism. Men like the late Hoysala who came directly into contact with the atmosphere of Santiniketan made a beginning in children's literature.

Recently, a number of writers have been translating into Kannada Tagore's poems, plays, novels, short stories and essays. There are some like Narayan Sangam, Narayan Swamy Iyer who have been doing it from earlier days and from the

original Bengali. Years ago, Sri Masti Venkatesh Iyengar, the noted short-story writer, had written a biography of Tagore. Today in addition to translations of Tagore's works, critical studies are planned to be written and published

It is hoped that the time would soon come when the study of Indian Literature as one movement would be made and written. Rabindranath Tagore is the first Indian writer to have brought that sense of unity, that sense of one nation as far as the modern Indian Literatures are concerned.

RABINDRANATH AND BENGALI LITERATURE

SASIBHUSAN DASGUPTA

THE very caption 'Rabindranath and Bengali literature' suggests some sort of a historical study, and that study may naturally resolve itself into three parts ; first, a study of the religious, cultural and literary background against which Rabindranath flourished, secondly, a study of the contribution of Rabindranath as a poet, playwright, novelist and essayist to Bengali literature, and thirdly, a study of his profound influence on the course of Bengali literature in all its forms. Of the three parts I would by pass the second one (i. e. the question of Tagore's contribution to Bengali literature) as it is evident that not even a semblance of justice can be done to it within the limit of the address. To be in tune with the trend that dominates the seven-day long discussions of this conference I should apparently concentrate on the third part of the question, that is, the influence of Tagore on Bengali literature ; but in this I feel myself in a disadvantageous position in comparison with my colleagues speaking on behalf of the other regional literatures of India ; for, with them Tagore is an occasional welcome shower or an enjoyable and profitable sun shine that works on a congenial field ; but with us Tagore is an *elan vital* that evolved itself for a century and has been still evolving through the variegated texture and property of an unexhausted soil. It is difficult for me to speak of the influence of Tagore on Bengali literature in terms of demonstrable facts. What I therefore propose to do is to say a few words about the background against which the poet flourished and to indicate his relation with Bengali literature in that respect.

When we speak of a historical study we shall do better to bear in mind the strong note of protest Rabindranath sounded against the rigidity with which we apply our concept of history to all phenomena of life including all the activities of a creative

genius. Judging from the dominant trend of the day one may go so far as to say that the present-day concept of history is going to substitute our time-honoured concept of the Power Almighty shaping the courses of the universe History is generally conceived now-a-days as the play of a never-failing series of emergent forces in interaction and giving rise to new forces in turn to preserve the continuity of the series. Though the power of man's reaction to the action of such forces and thus his power of determining the course of history has not been absolutely denied in any of the quarters, the accent has for some time been shifted from the determining power of man on history to that of history on man. To this Tagore as a creative genius took strong exception Apart from the fact that Tagore was an incorrigible teleologist in the face of all the vicissitudes of life that might have driven him to a different conclusion, he had an inherent apathy even as an empirical man towards the deterministic view of history which reduces a genius to the resultant of forces acting in and through a particular centre of an empirical ego under a given condition He has asserted, not occasionally and incidentally, but with determined tenacity, that in the realm of artistic creation he was as unique and alone and self-controlled as the Primordial Artist was.

This really is a challenge to our modern interpretation of history and raises some fundamental problems, the problem of the relation of individual efforts to the historical process taken as a whole, the problem of the possibility of successful artistic creation in absolute isolation, the problem whether the individual can be significant by himself or his meaning is drived entirely from his organic relation with the society Lest we be lost in the woods, let us not raise these questions and try to answer them this way or that way ; let us rather try to sieze the truth which the poet was hinting at by such assertions Some of his poems and

autobiographical sketches lead us to believe that Tagore had a conviction that the poet in him cannot be explained either with reference to the immediate past of Bengal including the religious, social or literary movements of the Bengali renaissance of the nineteenth century, or with reference to the contemporary social forces acting and reacting on one another. This may not agree with some of our cherished theories, and may not perhaps even be strictly correct; but the poet had no hesitation in making it clear whenever occasion arose that his poetical life along with his religious life followed a mysterious path of its own. The poet in him evolved within the person in him with all his visions, realizations and other experiences. The depth and delight of his intuition gathered force within and inspired him to the experiments with varied poetic forms : the betrothal of this intuition and expression was performed at a very early age, it being kept a secret to the poet for a long time.

A claim of this sort may, at the first instance, rouse unkind reactions, but even on analysis and scrutiny I have personally been inclined to agree with the poet, at least in this, that Bengali poetry either of the medieval period or of the nineteenth century cannot be set up as a sufficient background for the variety and richness of Tagore's poetry and music. There is no gainsaying the fact that Tagore was drawn, from his very early life, to the exquisite love lyrics of the Vaiahnava poets. Apart from his early experiments in Vaishnava songs on the line of Jayadeva, Vidyapati and Chandidas Vaishnava poetry has left its marks on the poet in his emotional approach to truth particularly during the period of *Gitanjali*, *Gitimalya*, *Gitali*. The myth of the Vaishnava poets acquired a symbolic value in his poetry, and the influence of Vaishnava poetry can be traced in his use of symbols, images and also in the diction The deep impression which he received from the mystic village singers, the Bauls of Bengal, has been spoken of by the poet himself on

different occasions ; he was attracted both by the idea of *the Man of the Heart* of the Bauls as well by the unsophisticated, and at the same time deeply suggestive, expression which they gave to their mystic experiences through musical compositions. The poet was deeply impressed by their tune also But if we consider the genius of Tagore even only in the field of poetry and music, we may say that all these have added tinge and tone here and there and cannot strongly dispute his claim that the texture was mainly his own.

Coming to the Bengali poetry of the modern period, we cannot say that there was absolutely no preparation of the ground in the Bengali poetry of the second half of the nineteenth century for the advent of a poet like Tagore Madhusudan Datta, though better known for his epic performance, composed a number of sonnets a few of which contain genuine lyrical elements with a sincerely personal touch. In spite of his general prosaic disposition Hemchandra draws our attention to nature in some of his poems Notwithstanding the wildness of his genius poet Nabin Chandra Sen has made nature more living and intimate to us in his narrative poems, and flashes of romantic ideas and expressions of a high order are not conspicuous by their absence in his poetry. Some of the unconventional imageries and expressions of the nature-poet Govindadas suddenly rouse us from our poetic slumber, though erudities might have marred the total effect The deep insight and the intensity of emotion which have found their expression in Surendranath Majumdar's poetic description of the *Essential She* deserve a respectful mention in this context. And with them all we may mention the name of Biharilal Chakravarti who has been highly spoken of by Tagore himself in a lengthy discourse of critical appreciation. Tagore has described Biharilal as the *Bird of the Dawn* and a harbinger of a new era in romantic lyrical poetry It is sometimes a pet word with the historians

of Bengali poetry of the late nineteenth century that Biharilal showed the path and it was for Tagore just to tread on it. But to be honest to ourselves it seems to be a travesty of fact to describe Rabindranath Tagore as the successor of Biharilal Chakravarty in the field of Bengali poetry. Not to speak of Biharilal in particular, it may be said in a general way that the gamut of Bengali romantic lyrical poetry of the late nineteenth century does not lead us necessarily to the poetry of Tagore.

What seems to be true of poetry, seems to be true also of the other branches of literature. For instance, Tagore has written a good number of dramas and dramatic pieces both in prose and poetry. Among them there are long and short dramatic poems, tragedies, comedies, satires, symbolic dramas, song-dramas and dance-dramas. I shall not point to the varieties and dramatic ramifications, which are new so far as Bengali drama is concerned, but shall point to the fact that the dramatic genius of Tagore has not followed the line of development of Bengali stage and drama of the nineteenth century. It has occurred to me that many of his dramatic devices have evolved from within the creative artist in Tagore in the same way in which the poetic forms have evolved Most of them were moulded in his own workshop.

Many may not agree with me. They may feel tempted to try to explain, with reference to western literature the genius of Tagore which cannot be happily explained historically with reference to Bengali literature or Indian literature in general. This is a new controversy and a very important too into which I do not venture to enter in the present context, and we have no other alternative to present our reaction here very summarily. Tagore's close acquaintance with English poetry, particularly with that of the romantic period, is a fact above all controversy. He had a general acquaintance with the master minds of the West both in the field of thought and literature. Later in his

life he had personal contact with most of the contemporary master minds both of the East and the West All these no doubt supply ingredients for the formation of the total personality of which literature in its various forms is but the expression ; but to go the extent of even hinting that Tagore was mainly, if not wholly a product of Western literature of the eighteenth and nineteenth cenntries, again seems to be a greater travesty of facts.

But though Tagore claimed that the poet in him evolved with the unique person in him, and both the main spring of inspiration and the workshop to mould them to suitable forms were within his own self, he was never shy of confessing the high heritage with which he was proudly privileged. In this matter of heritage Tagore was more an Indian than particularly a Bengalee. He had his heritage in the Upanishads of India, in two great epics of India, in classical Sanskrit poetry, particularly in Kalidas, in the Buddhist traditions and episodes. Later in life the medieval Saint-poets of India—particularly those of the Nirguna school, strengthened his spiritual and poetic convictions which were already derived from his own experiences. With these may be added the Vaishnava poetry and the Baul songs of Bengal reference to which has already been made. Elements derived from a wide reading of Western literature, could very easily be transformed into elements of his own nature ; the result has been that the whole of his creation come to us as the expression of one uniqne integral Person, Rabindranath—the poet.

So far as Bengali literature is concerned Tagore has been a century by himself. He is a century not merely by his own creations which themselves are sufficient both in quality and quantity to represent a century, but also by inspiring a generation of litterateurs to creative efforts in various lines Even in the period what is conventionally called the post-Rabindra era

of Bengali literature Tagore is as living the force as when he was living in his person ; for, still he inspires either to follow his own path, or to revolt against him for discovering new horizons so that literature may not cease to be a dynamic force and lose itself in conventionalism.

রবীন্দ্রনাথ ও বৈষ্ণব কবিতা

শ্রীহরেকৃষ্ণ মুখোপাধ্যায়

জীবনে কয়েকবার রবীন্দ্রনাথের পাদস্পর্শের সৌভাগ্য হইয়াছিল। আজ এই আসন্ন সায়াহ্নে যখন ওপারের ডাক শুনিবার জন্য উৎকর্ণ হইয়া আছি, সেই শেষ সময়ে পৃথিবী হইতে বিদায়গ্রহণের পূর্বে বিশ্বের এই পুণ্যতীর্থে জগদ্‌বরেণ্য কবির সাধনপীঠে প্রণাম নিবেদনের সুযোগদানে আপনারা আমাকে কৃতার্থ করিয়াছেন। তজ্জন্য আপনাদিগকে আমার কৃতজ্ঞ অন্তরের প্রীতিনমস্কার জ্ঞাপন করিতেছি।

আমাদের শাস্ত্রে যে অর্থে কবিশব্দের প্রসিদ্ধ প্রয়োগ আছে, সেই অর্থে রবীন্দ্রনাথ একজন অন্বর্থনামা সার্থক কবি। পরিপূর্ণ সত্যের যেমন সমগ্রতা উপলব্ধ হয় না, তেমনই রবীন্দ্রনাথকে বুঝিবার প্রচেষ্টা একজন মানুষের পক্ষে সারাজীবন ব্যাপী সাধনাতেও সম্ভবপর হইয়া উঠে না। আবার কবির বহু বিচিত্র রচনাবলীর একটা দিক লইয়াও যিনি আলোচনা করিবেন, স্বপ্নেও কখনো তাহার মনে এ স্পর্দ্ধা জাগ্রত হইবে না যে রবীন্দ্রনাথকে তিনি আয়ত্তের মধ্যে আনিতে পারিয়াছেন।

অনুসন্ধান করিলে ভারতীয় সাহিত্য এমন কি বিশ্বসাহিত্যেও রবীন্দ্রনাথের সুস্পষ্ট প্রভাবের নিদর্শন পাওয়া যাইবে। বর্তমান বাঙ্গালা সাহিত্যের সকল অঙ্গই তাঁহার প্রভাবে পরিপুষ্ট হইয়াছে। বাঙ্গালার "ছেলেভুলানো ছড়া" হইতে জগতের দুইটী অমর মহাকাব্য রামায়ণ মহাভারতও কবির বৈশিষ্ট্যপূর্ণ দৃষ্টিভঙ্গীতে অভিনব তাৎপর্য লইয়া ধরা দিয়াছে। বঙ্গবাণীর মন্দিরে এমন কোন প্রকোষ্ঠ দেখিতে পাইতেছি না, যে প্রকোষ্ঠ রবিকর-স্পর্শে আলোকিত হয় নাই, যে প্রকোষ্ঠে কবি চরণার্পণ করেন নাই। কবিতায়, গানে, গল্পে, উপন্যাসে, নাটকে, প্রবন্ধে, নিবন্ধে, আলোচনা ও সমালোচনায় এবং চিঠিপত্রে যে অপরিসীম অক্ষয় সম্পদ্ তিনি রাখিয়া গিয়াছেন, স্বাভাবিক ভাবেই বাঙ্গালাসাহিত্য-ভাণ্ডার তাহাতে সমৃদ্ধ হইয়াছে। সমগ্র ভারতবাসীর সঙ্গে বাঙ্গালীও এজন্য চিরকাল গর্ববোধ করিবে।

বৈষ্ণব-সাহিত্য বিশাল বাঙ্গালা সাহিত্যেরই অন্তর্ভুক্ত। সুতরাং বাঙ্গালা-সাহিত্যের কথা বলিতে হইলে যেমন বৈষ্ণব সাহিত্যকে বাদ দেওয়া চলে না,

তেমনই রবীন্দ্রনাথের প্রসঙ্গ আলোচনা করিতে গেলেই বৈষ্ণব-সাহিত্যের কথা আসিয়া পড়ে। অবশ্য বৈষ্ণব সাহিত্যেরও অনেকগুলি বিভাগ আছে। মঙ্গলকাব্য, চরিতকথা, নাটক, রসশাস্ত্র এবং নানা নিবন্ধাদি লইয়া বিপুল বৈষ্ণবসাহিত্য গড়িয়া উঠিয়াছে। পদাবলী-সাহিত্য এই বিভাগেরই একটি বৃহত্তর অংশ। সর্বভারতের সুপরিচিত কবি জয়দেবকে লইয়াই আমরা ইহার আরম্ভকাল গণনা করি। মিথিলার বিদ্যাপতি এবং বীরভূমের চণ্ডীদাস জয়দেব-পরবর্তী দুইজন উল্লেখযোগ্য কবি। অতঃপর প্রেমাবতার শ্রীচৈতন্যচন্দ্রের অভ্যুদয় ঘটে। এই লোকোত্তর পুরুষকে কেন্দ্র করিয়া এক বৃহত্তর কবিগোষ্ঠী চৈতন্যলীলা ও শ্রীরাধাকৃষ্ণ-লীলা লইয়া যে সমস্ত ভাবরস-সমৃদ্ধ পদ রচনা করেন, তাহাই পদাবলী-সাহিত্য নামে অভিহিত হয়। ইহা পূর্বভারতেরই নিজস্ব সৃষ্টি।

দুই একটী গান, দুই চারিটি কবিতা, অথবা দুই পাঁচটী প্রবন্ধ লইয়া কোনো লেখকের বিশেষতঃ রবীন্দ্রনাথের মতো একজন সার্বভৌম কবির সম্বন্ধে মত প্রকাশ করা নিরাপদ বলিয়া মনে হয় না। তথাপি আমার মনে হয়, রবীন্দ্রনাথ একজন বৈষ্ণব কবি; এমন কি তিনি বৈষ্ণব কবিগোষ্ঠীর শেষ উত্তরাধিকারী—এ কথা বলিয়াও তাঁহাকে পরিচিত করিতে পারি। কারণ, আমি তাঁহার বহু গানে, বহু কবিতায় পদাবলী-সাহিত্যের ফল্গুপ্রবাহ লক্ষ্য করিয়াছি। কেহ কেহ বলেন, বৈষ্ণব কবিগণ মাধুর্য্যের কবি, রবীন্দ্রনাথ সৌন্দর্যের কবি এবং রবীন্দ্রনাথ ঐশ্বর্যের উপাসক। আমি কিন্তু এ মতের সমর্থন করিতে পারি না। সৌন্দর্যের সঙ্গে মাধুর্যের বিরোধও বুঝিতে পারি না। আবার জয়দেবের কাব্যে মাধুর্যের সঙ্গে ঐশ্বর্য্য ওতঃপ্রোত ভাবে মিশিয়া রহিয়াছে দেখিয়া রবীন্দ্রনাথকেও পাশাপাশি রাখিতে ইচ্ছা করি।

আমার মনে হয়, এই ভারতের মহামানবের সাগরতীরে যেমন বিশ্বের এক অপূর্ব মিলনক্ষেত্র রচিত হইয়াছে, তেমনই ভারতীয় সাধনার বিশ্বতোমুখী প্রবাহের সঙ্গে বৈষ্ণব কবিগণের ভাবধারাও রবীন্দ্রনাথের জীবনে আসিয়া একাত্মতা লাভ করিয়াছে। বৈষ্ণব কবিগণের ভাবসাধনা আত্মসাৎপূর্বক সাধ্য বস্তুকে তিনি এক অপূর্ব ভঙ্গিমায় প্রকাশ করিয়া গিয়াছেন। করে নির্ঝরের

স্বপ্নভঙ্গ হইয়াছিল জানিনা, বিন্দু বিন্দু সঞ্চিত বারিধারা গোমুখীর গুপ্তকক্ষ ভেদ করিয়া কোন শুভক্ষণে বাঙ্গালার শ্যাম সমতলে নামিয়া আসিয়াছিল বলিতে পারি না, ইহার পর হইতেই হইয়াছিল তাহার যাত্রা সুরু। জীবনদেবতা উচ্চারণ করিয়াছিলেন "অয়মারম্ভঃ শুভায় ভবতু"! তাহার পর কত উর্বর ভূমি সরস করিয়া কত কেদার প্রান্তর প্লাবিত করিয়া, কত তৃষিত তাপিতের তৃপ্তি বিধান করিয়া, তীরতরুর বৃন্তচ্যুত পুষ্পসম্ভার উপায়নরূপে গ্রহণ করিয়া সেই জীবনপ্রবাহ মহাসাগরে গিয়া মিলিত হইয়াছে। সেই দিন হইতে কবির তীর্থাস্পদ জীবনে সুরধুনীর তীরে তীরে দুই পার্শ্বে কত না তীর্থের উদ্ভব ঘটিয়াছে। আর সেই মহাতীর্থ সাগরসঙ্গমের সন্ধানে জগতের অগণিত মানব যাত্রা শুরু করিয়াছে। আজিও সে যাত্রার বিরাম নাই। অনাগত ভবিষ্যতেও অনন্তকাল ধরিয়া এই পথে যাত্রার কখনো অভাব ঘটিবে না।

বৈষ্ণব কবিতা প্রথম কৈশোরেই কবিকে মুগ্ধ করিয়াছিল এবং বৈষ্ণব কবির ভাবের সঙ্গে ভাষাও তাঁহার সঙ্গী হইয়াছিল। রবীন্দ্রনাথ ভানুসিংহের পদাবলী রচনা করিয়াছিলেন। এই পদসমষ্টির মধ্যে উত্তরকালে কবিকর্তৃক স্বীকৃত দুইটী পদ "মরণ রে তুঁহু মম শ্যাম সমান", এবং "কো তুঁহু বলবি মোয়"। আশ্চর্যের বিষয় কিশোর কবি মৃত্যুকে যে দৃষ্টিতে দেখিয়াছিলেন, পরিণত জীবনেও সে দৃষ্টির কোন পরিবর্তন ঘটে নাই। ররং উত্তরোত্তর জীবনের পথে কবি যতই অগ্রসর হইয়াছেন তাঁহার দিব্যদৃষ্টিতে মরণের নব নব রূপান্তর প্রত্যক্ষীভূত হইয়াছে। কখনো বালিকাবধূর বঁধু-রূপে, গৃহস্থবধূর অতিথিরূপে, বরবেশে সজ্জিত ত্রিলোচনরূপে কতরূপেই না তাহাকে দেখিয়াছেন। আবার এই মরণই রূপান্তরে কখনো বিদেশিনীরূপে, কখনো মানসী প্রতিমারূপে কবিকে আকৃষ্ট করিয়াছেন। "মৃত্যু অমৃত করে দান" এই বিশ্বাসে তিনি দৃঢ় প্রতিষ্ঠিত ছিলেন। আমার মনে হয় কবি যাহাকে "কো তুঁহু" বলিয়া প্রশ্ন করিয়াছিলন, তিনিও মরণেরই কোন অভিনব বিগ্রহ। ভবিষ্যৎ জীবনে কবি আপন প্রশ্নের উত্তর পাইয়াছিলেন, এবং যাহাকে প্রশ্ন করিয়াছিলেন তাঁহাকে চিনিতেও পারিয়াছিলেন। বৈষ্ণব কবিগণও মৃত্যুর কথা বলিয়াছেন। গোবিন্দদাস বলিতেছেন— "এ সখি বিরহে মরণ নিরদন্দ। ঐছে মিলবে যব শ্যামরচন্দ" ॥

শশিশেখর বলিয়াছেন—"গমন ঔর রমণ মোহে ভুললরে প্রিয়সখি কবি কি উপায় বুদ্ধি বলনা। ইহ দিবস যামিনী কৈছে বিরমায়ব এতহু দুখে হত এ জীউ গেলনা" ॥ জ্ঞানদাস বলিয়াছেন "পিরীতি মিরিতি তুলে তোলাইলুঁ পিরীতি গুরুযাভার"। পিরীতি ও মৃত্যুকে তুলাদণ্ডে তৌল করিয়া দেখিলাম পিরীতি গুরুভার হইল। বৈষ্ণব কবিও জিজ্ঞাসা করিয়াছেন—"তুমি কৈছে মাধব কহত হি মোয? নিজেরাই উত্তর দিয়াছেন—শীতের ওঢ়নী পিযা গিরিষের বা। বরিষার ছত্র পিয়া দরিযার না"। বলিয়াছেন—পাখীক পাখ মীন কি পানী। জীবক জীবন হাম তুযা জানি ॥

কবি বলিযাছেন—"সীমার মাঝে অসীম তুমি বাজাও আপন সুর। আমার মাঝে তোমার প্রকাশ তাই এত মধুর"? বলিযাছেন—"আপনারে তুমি দেখিছ মধুর রসে। আমার মাঝারে নিজেরে করিযা দান" ॥ অপরে এই কথাগুলির যে অর্থই করুন না কেন, আমি ইহার মধ্যে বৈষ্ণব কবির ভাব-ধারারই স্পর্শ পাইযাছি। আজিকার দিনের বর্ষার এই শ্যাম সমারোহ বৈষ্ণব কবিগণের মতোই কবিকে উতলা করিযা তুলিত। আষাঢ়ের নিকষ কাল নবীন মেঘ কবির নযনে কি মায়া-অঞ্জন পরাইযা দিয়াছিল কে জানে, তাঁহার জাগ্রত স্বপ্নে বৃন্দাবনের চিত্র প্রতিবিম্বিত হইত। গুরু গুরু দেয়া গরজনে তাঁহার অন্তর কি এক অসহ বেদনায় গুমরিযা উঠিত। তাঁহার পূর্ব স্মৃতি মনে পড়াইয়া দিত।

আজিকে এমন দিনে শুধু পড়ে মনে।
সেই দিবা অভিসার
পাগলিনী রাধিকার
না জানি সে কবেকার দূর বৃন্দাবনে ॥

কবির মনে পড়িত—

সেই কদম্বের মূল যমুনার তীর।
সেই সে শিখীর নৃত্য
এখনো হরিছে চিত্ত
ফেলিছে বিরহছায়া শ্রাবণ তিমির ॥

সত্যদ্রষ্টা কবি আপন অনুভূতিব নিকষে কষিয়া দেখিতেন—

আজো আছে বৃন্দাবন মানবেব মনে।
শবতেব পূর্ণিমায়
শ্রাবণেব ববিষায়
উঠে বিবহেব গাথা বনে উপবনে।

বৃন্দাবনেব কবি না হইলে কি তিনি শুনিতে পাইতেন—

এখনো সে বাঁশী বাজে যমুনাব তীবে।
এখনো প্রেমেব খেলা,
সাবা দিন, সাবা বেলা
এখনো কাঁদিছে বাধা হৃদযকুটিবে

বৈষ্ণব কবিগণ এক মুহূর্তেব জন্যও কবিব সঙ্গ ত্যাগ কবেন নাই। মেঘদূতেব কথা লিখিতে গিযাও ববীন্দ্রনাথ জযদেবকে স্মবণ কবিযাছেন—

ভাবতেব পূর্ব শেষে
আমি বসে আজি, যে শ্যামল বঙ্গদেশে
জযদেব কবি আব এক বর্ষা দিনে
দেখেছিলা দিগন্তেব তমাল বিপিনে
শ্যামচ্ছাযা পূর্ণ মেঘে মেদুব অম্বব॥

তাঁহাব প্রথম যৌবনেব লেখা মথুবাশীর্ষক একটি কবিতায কবি বলিযাছেন—“বাঁশবী বাজাতে চাহি বাঁশবী বাজিল কই”। কবিব একটি গান শুনিয়াছি—“ওগো শোন কে বাজায”। এমন অনেক কবিতা, অনেক গান আছে।

কবি যৌবনেই বৈষ্ণব কবিতা সঙ্কলন কবিযাছেন। চণ্ডীদাস বিদ্যাপতি প্রভৃতি বৈষ্ণব কবিগণেব মর্ম্মস্পর্শী সমালোচনায আপন বসজ্ঞতাব পবিচয দিযাছেন। অতঃপব নিজেই একদিন জিজ্ঞাসা কবিযাছেন—

শুধু বৈকুণ্ঠেব তবে বৈষ্ণবেব গান?
পূর্ববাগ, অনুবাগ, মান-অভিমান,
অভিসাব, প্রেমলীলা, বিবহমিলন,
বৃন্দাবনগাথা,—এই প্রণয-স্বপন

শশিশেখর বলিয়াছেন—"শমন ঔর বমণ মোহে ভুললরে প্রিয়সখি কবি কি উপায় বুদ্ধি বলনা। ইহ দিবস যামিনী কৈছে বিবমায়ব এতহু দুখে হত এ জীউ গেলনা" ॥ জ্ঞানদাস বলিয়াছেন "পিবীতি মিবিতি তুলে তোলাইলুঁ পিবীতি গুরুযাভাব"। পিবীতি ও মৃত্যুকে তুলাদণ্ডে তোল কবিযা দেখিলাম পিবীতি গুরুভাব হইল। বৈষ্ণব কবিও জিজ্ঞাসা কবিযাছেন—"তুমি কৈছে মাধব কহত হি মোয় ? নিজেবাই উত্তব দিযাছেন—শীতেব ওঢনী পিয়া গিবিষেব বা। ববিষাব ছত্র পিয়া দবিযাব না"। বলিযাছেন—পাখীক পাখ মীন কি পানী। জীবক জীবন হাম তুয়া জানি ॥

কবি বলিযাছেন—"সীমাব মাঝে অসীম তুমি বাজাও আপন সুব। আমাব মাঝে তোমাব প্রকাশ তাই এত মধুব" ? বলিযাছেন— "আপনাবে তুমি দেখিছ মধুব বসে। আমাব মাঝাবে নিজেবে কবিযা দান" ॥ অপবে এই কথাগুলিব যে অর্থই করুন না কেন, আমি ইহাব মধ্যে বৈষ্ণব কবিব ভাব-ধাবাবই স্পর্শ পাইযাছি। আজিকাব দিনেব বর্ষাব এই শ্যাম সমাবোহ বৈষ্ণব কবিগণেব মতোই কবিকে উতলা কবিযা তুলিত। আষাঢেব নিকষ কাল নবীন মেঘ কবিব নযনে কি মায়া-অঞ্জন পবাইযা দিযাছিল কে জানে, তাঁহাব জাগ্রত স্বপ্নে বৃন্দাবনেব চিত্র প্রতিবিম্বিত হইত। গুরু গুরু দেযা গবজনে তাঁহাব অন্তব কি এক অসহ বেদনায গুমবিযা উঠিত। তাঁহাব পূর্ব স্মৃতি মনে পড়াইয়া দিত।

আজিকে এমন দিনে শুধু পড়ে মনে।
সেই দিবা অভিসাব
পাগলিনী বাধিকাব
না জানি সে কবেকাব দূব বৃন্দাবনে ॥

কবিব মনে পড়িত—

সেই কদম্বেব মূল যমুনাব তীব।
সেই সে শিখীব নৃত্য
এখনো হবিছে চিত্ত
ফেলিছে বিবহছায়া শ্রাবণ তিমির ॥

সত্যদ্রষ্টা কবি আপন অনুভূতিব নিকষে কষিযা দেখিতেন—

আজো আছে বৃন্দাবন মানবেব মনে।
শবতেব পূর্ণিমায়
শ্রাবণের ববিষায
উঠে বিবহেব গাথা বনে উপবনে।

বৃন্দাবনেব কবি না হইলে কি তিনি শুনিতে পাইতেন—

এখনো সে বাঁশী বাজে যমুনাব তীবে।
এখনো প্রেমেব খেলা,
সাবা দিন, সাবা বেলা
এখনো কাঁদিছে বাধা হৃদযকুটিবে

বৈষ্ণব কবিগণ এক মুহূর্তেব জন্যও কবিব সঙ্গ ত্যাগ কবেন নাই। মেঘদূতেব কথা লিখিতে গিয়াও ববীন্দ্রনাথ জযদেবকে স্মবণ কবিযাছেন—

ভাবতেব পূর্ব শেষে
আমি বসে আজি, যে শ্যামল বঙ্গদেশে
জযদেব কবি আব এক বর্ষা দিনে
দেখেছিলা দিগন্তেব তমাল বিপিনে
শ্যামচ্ছাযা পূর্ণ মেঘে মেদুব অম্বব ॥

তাঁহাব প্রথম যৌবনেব লেখা মথুবাশীর্ষক একটি কবিতায কবি বলিযাছেন—"বাঁশবী বাজাতে চাহি বাঁশবী বাজিল কই"। কবিব একটি গান শুনিয়াছি—"ওগো শোন কে বাজায"। এমন অনেক কবিতা, অনেক গান আছে।

কবি যৌবনেই বৈষ্ণব কবিতা সঙ্কলন কবিযাছেন। চণ্ডীদাস বিদ্যাপতি প্রভৃতি বৈষ্ণব কবিগণেব মর্ম্মস্পর্শী সমালোচনায আপন বসজ্ঞতাব পবিচয দিযাছেন। অতঃপব নিজেই একদিন জিজ্ঞাসা কবিয়াছেন—

শুধু বৈকুণ্ঠেব তবে বৈষ্ণবেব গান ?
পূর্ব্বরাগ, অনুবাগ, মান-অভিমান,
অভিসাব, প্রেমলীলা, বিবহমিলন,
বৃন্দাবনগাথা,—এই প্রণয়-স্বপন

শ্রাবণের শর্ব্বরীতে কালিন্দীর কূলে
চারি চক্ষে চেয়ে দেখা কদম্বের মূলে
সরমে সম্ভ্রমে—এ কি শুধু দেবতার ?
এ সঙ্গীতরস-ধারা নহে মিটাবার
দীন মর্তবাসী এই নরনারীদের
প্রতিরজনীর আর প্রতিদিবসের
তপ্ত প্রেমতৃষা ?

জিজ্ঞাসার উত্তর দিতে গিয়া বলিয়াছেন—

এ গীত-উৎসব মাঝে—
শুধু তিনি আর ভক্ত নির্জনে বিরাজে ॥

এমনভাবে মাত্র দুটি কথায় বৈষ্ণব কবিতার মর্মকথা—রবীন্দ্রনাথের পূর্বে আর কেহ প্রকাশ করেন নাই। বৈষ্ণব পদাবলীকে গানের উৎসব ভিন্ন অপর কোন্ সংজ্ঞায় অভিহিত করা চলে ? কবিতা-আস্বাদনের, রসগ্রহণেরও অধিকার অর্জন করিতে হয়। প্রসন্ন উজ্জ্বল চিত্ত ভিন্ন রস-ভাবের উপলব্ধি ঘটে না। সুতরাং প্রকৃত কবির কবিতার উৎসবে তিনি এবং তাঁহার ভক্ত ভিন্ন অপর কাহারো যে প্রবেশাধিকার নাই, ইহা অতিসত্য কথা। রবীন্দ্রনাথের কবিতা সম্বন্ধেও একথা বিশেষরূপে বলিতে পারি।

রবীন্দ্রনাথের কবিতার সঙ্গে বৈষ্ণব কবিতার ছত্রে ছত্রে অবিকল মিল অনুসন্ধানের প্রয়োজন আছে বলিয়া মনে করি না। দেখিতে হইবে আত্মগত ভাবসাধনায় বৈষ্ণব কবিতাকে আপনার করিয়া লইয়া কবি তাহাকে কেমন অপরূপ ভঙ্গিমায় প্রকাশ করিয়াছেন। দুই একটি উদাহরণ দিতেছি। জ্ঞানদাস প্রায় চারিশত বৎসর পূর্বে একটি পদে বলিয়াছেন—

'প্রেমপরাভব-দুঃখ সহন না যায়"

দীর্ঘ দিন পরে 'গুপ্ত প্রেম' কবিতায় রবীন্দ্রনাথ বলিতেছেন—

আমি আমার অপমান সহিতে পারি
প্রেমের সহে না তো অপমান।
অমরাবতী ত্যেজে হৃদয়ে এসেছে যে
তাহারো চেয়ে সে যে মহীয়ান ॥

শ্রীরাধা শ্রীকৃষ্ণের বংশী শ্রবণ করিয়াছেন। বংশীনিঃস্বনে তাঁহারই নাম ধ্বনিত হইতেছে। আত্মসমর্পণের দুর্নিবার আকর্ষণ। বাঁশরীসঙ্গীতের এই সুধাবিষের জ্বালা কয়েকজন বৈষ্ণব কবি ভিন্ন ভিন্ন ভঙ্গীতে প্রকাশ করিয়াছেন। একজন কবি বাঁশী শুনিয়া শ্রীমতীকে বলিতেছেন— যে বাঁশী বাজাইতেছে, চল আমরা গিয়া সেই মুরলীধরকে নিষেধ করিয়া আসি। রবীন্দ্রনাথ কিন্তু নূতন কথা বলিয়াছেন। রবীন্দ্রনাথ বলিয়াছেন—"মরি লো মরি আমাকে বাঁশীতে ডেকেছে কে"? সে কে সখি, কে আমাকে বাঁশীতে ডেকেছে। ভেবেছিলাম তো গৃহ ছেড়ে কোথাও যাবনা, কিন্তু বাঁশী ঐ যে বাহিরে থেকে আহ্বান জানাচ্চে, এখন বলতো কি উপায় করি। জানিনা যমুনাতীরের কোন কুঞ্জবনে সন্ধ্যার স্তিমিত আলোকে ধীর সমীরে এই বাঁশী বাজচে, সখি তোরা কি সেই কুঞ্জে যাবার পথ জানিস্, জানিস্ যদি আমায় বলে দে। আমি সেখানে যাব সখি। যে হাস্যস্ফুরিতাধরের ফুৎকার ভিন্ন বাঁশী কখনো এমন সুরে বাজতো না, যে হাসি মেশানো না থাকলে বাঁশী এত মিষ্টি শোনাতো না। আমি গিয়ে তার সেই সুন্দর মুখের মধুর হাসি দেখবো সখি, আমার গাঁথা এই ফুলের মালা তাকে পরিয়ে আসবো। আর বলে আসবো তোমার বাঁশী আমার প্রাণে বেজেচে। সুর আমার প্রাণস্পর্শ কোরেচে। আমার হৃদয়তন্ত্রীতে ধ্বনি জাগিয়েচে। চিত্রটি নূতন এবং মনোহারী।

রবীন্দ্রনাথের রচিত অজস্র কবিতা, অসংখ্য গান। এমন কত উদাহরণ দেখাইব। রবীন্দ্রনাথের 'খেয়া' হইতে "শুভক্ষণ" ও "ত্যাগ" কবিতা দুইটি উদ্ধৃত করিতেছি।

ওগো মা

বাজার দুলাল যাবে আজি মোর
ঘরের সমুখপথে,
আজি এ প্রভাতে গৃহকাজ লয়ে
রহিব বলো কী মতে॥
বলে দে আমায় কী করিব সাজ,
কী ছাঁদে কবরী বেঁধে লব আজ,

পরিব অঙ্গে কেমন ভঙ্গে
কোন্ বরণের বাস।
মা গো কী হল তোমার, অবাক নয়নে
মুখপানে কেন চাস।

আমার বহু দিনের প্রতীক্ষিত সেই শুভক্ষণ আজ সমাগতপ্রায়। মনে হয জন্ম হইতে জন্মান্তবেব পথে যুগ হইতে যুগান্তর ধরিয়া যাহার পথ চাহিয়া আছি, শুনিলাম—শুধু শুনি নাই নিশ্চিতরূপে জানিযাছি, সেই নব যুবরাজ আজ আমাবই গৃহেব সম্মুখেব পথ দিযা চলিযা যাইবেন। এই শুভ প্রভাতে কি গৃহকাজ লইযা থাকিতে পাবি। এখনই তো আমার সজ্জা সম্পূর্ণ করিয়া আমাকে বাতায়নপথে দাঁড়াইতে হইবে। জানি, তিনি আমাকে দেখিতে পাইবেন না, অগণিত কবী তুবগ পদাতিক পবিবেষ্টন ভেদ কবিযা, আন্দোলিত ধ্বজ চামব পতাকাব অন্তবালে আমাদেব চাবি চক্ষেব মিলন ঘটিবে না। কিন্তু আমি যে তাহাকে দর্শন কবিব। আমি কি এই দীনবেশে তাহাকে দেখিতে পাবি? যে দিন আমাদেব পবস্পবেব মিলন ঘটিবে সে দিন এ দেহে আববণেব এবং আভবণেব কোন প্রযোজন থাকিবে না। সে দিন চীব, চন্দন, হাব মিলনেব বাধা বলিযাই মনে হইবে। কিন্তু বলিযা দাও আমাকে, আজ আমি কেমন কবিযা বেণী বচনা কবিব, কোন্ ছান্দে কববী বাঁধিয়া লইব, কোন্ বর্ণেব পবিধেয় কেমন ভঙ্গীতে পবিধান কবিব?

গোপীগণেব অঙ্গসজ্জাব ইহাই গোপনতম বহস্য। অবশ্য প্রিয় দয়িত তাঁহাদিগকে দেখিতেন, দেখিয়া আনন্দিত হইতেন বলিযাই তাঁহাবা নিজ সুন্দব দেহকে বিবিধ বসন ভূষণে সুন্দবতবরূপে সাজাইয়া তুলিতেন। তথাপি ববীন্দ্রনাথেব সঙ্গে গোপীমনোবৃত্তিব কোন পার্থক্য আছে বলিয়া মনে হয না। উপাসনাবও ইহাই বীতি। শাস্ত্র বলেন "দেবো ভূত্বা দেবং যজেৎ"। সুন্দবেব উপাসনা কবিতে হইলে আপনাবও অন্তব বাহির সুন্দব কবিতে হইবে। কচিভেদে উপকবণেব পার্থক্য যতই থাকুক, আসল উদ্দেশ্যে কিন্তু কোনো বৈসাদৃশ্য নাই।

গৃহেব সম্মুখস্থ পথ দিযা চলিয়া গেলেন বাজনন্দন। নিমেষেব তবে হইলেও তাহাব দর্শন পাইযাছি।

ওগো মা,
বাজার দুলাল গেল চলি মোর
ঘরের সমুখপথে,
প্রভাতের আলো ঝলিল তাহার
স্বর্ণশিখর রথে।
ঘোমটা খসায়ে বাতায়নে থেকে
নিমিষের লাগি নিয়েছি মা দেখে,
ছিঁড়ি মণিহার ফেলেছি তাহার
পথের ধুলার' পরে।
মা গো কী হল তোমার, অবাক নয়নে
চাহিস কিসের তরে!
মোর হার-ছেঁড়া মণি নেয়নি কুড়ায়ে
রথের চাকায় গেছে সে গুঁড়ায়ে,
চাকার চিহ্ন ঘরের সমুখে
পড়ে আছে শুধু আঁকা।
আমি কি দিলাম কারে জানেনা সে কেউ—
ধুলায় রহিল ঢাকা।
তবু রাজার দুলাল গেল চলি মোর
ঘরের সমুখপথে—
মোর বক্ষের মণি না ফেলিয়া দিয়া
রহিব বলো কী মতে।

মাত্র এক নিমেষের জন্য তাহাকে দেখিয়াছি, আর সেই দেখার আনন্দে আমার বক্ষের মণিহার আমার সর্ব্বাপেক্ষা প্রিয়বস্তু, আমার অন্তরের অন্তরতম আশা আকাঙ্ক্ষার কামনা বাসনার, ব্যথা বেদনার মণিমাল্য তাহার উদ্দেশ্যে পথের ধুলায় জলাঞ্জলি দিয়াছি। আমি কি দিলাম কেহ জানিল না, কাহাকে দিলাম কেহ বুঝিলনা, আমার ছিন্ন হারের মণিখণ্ড কেহ কুড়াইয়া লইল না. অমন যে সাত রাজার ধন মণি, সে মণি তাহার রথের চাকায় গুঁড়া হইয়া

পথের ধূলায় মিশিয়া গেল। তথাপি রাজার দুলাল যখন আমারই গৃহের সম্মুখ দিয়া চলিয়া গেল, আমি বক্ষের মণিহার না ফেলিয়া থাকিতে পারি? প্রতিদানপ্রত্যাশা-হীন সর্ব্বস্ব সমর্পণের এই গান বৈষ্ণব গীতি কবিতাকেও শ্রীসম্পন্ন করিয়াছে।

রবীন্দ্রনাথের অনেক গান, অনেক ছোটখাট সাধারণ কবিতা, বৈষ্ণব কবিতার উপর নূতন আলোকসম্পাৎ করিয়াছে, অকস্মাৎ বৈষ্ণব কবিতাকে নূতন বর্ণে অনুরঞ্জিত করিয়াছে। রবীন্দ্রনাথের মাধ্যমে আমি বৈষ্ণব কবিতা নূতন করিয়া বুঝিবার সুযোগ পাইয়াছি। এমনই অনেক দিনের অনেক গান, অনেক কবিতার কথা স্মরণ করিতে পারি। 'পরিচয়' কবিতার কথাটাই বলি। এই কবিতাটী পড়িয়া যেন নূতন করিয়া বুঝিয়াছিলাম—কেন ব্রজবাসী ব্রজবাসিনী তাঁহাদের প্রাণপ্রিয় নয়নমণিকে এক একজন এক এক নামে ডাকিত। কেন শ্রীকৃষ্ণের শত নাম রচিত হইয়াছিল। যখন পড়িলাম—

আমি বাপু ডেকেই বসি
যেটাই মুখে আসুক না।
যারে ডাকি সেই তো বোঝে
আর সকলে হাসুক না

মনটা আনন্দে পরিপূর্ণ হইয়া উঠিল।

রবীন্দ্রনাথকে বুঝাইতে পারিব, এ স্পর্দ্ধা আমার নাই। তাঁহাকে বুঝিয়াছি সে কথাও সাহস করিয়া বলিতে পারিনা। তথাপি এ ভরসা আছে, যাঁহার উদ্দেশে আমার এই শ্রদ্ধানিবেদন, সহস্র ত্রুটী সত্ত্বেও যথাস্থান হইতে তিনি তাহা গ্রহণ করিয়া তাঁহার এই অযোগ্য ভক্তকে ধন্য করিবেন।

RABINDRANATH AND FOLK LITERATURE

KUNJA BIHARI DAS

THE AIM of the folklorist is to reconstruct the spiritual history of man as exemplified in the more or less inarticulate voices of humble people, not as represented by the outstanding works of the outstanding poets, artists and thinkers. Folk songs embody folk ways of thought as distinct from literary artistic and learned ways. We thus find two traditions existing side by side, the folk or popular and the cultivated literary or artistic. There is constant contact between the two and a continual exchange. Each influences and shapes the other. Great writers use folk lore material in their work and much of the cultivated tradition finds it way to the folk through the medium of the folk song and the folk tale. And it is the folk song and the tale which introduce us to the common folk of the country. They constitute the link between the past and the present, the faiths and beliefs of our forefathers and our religion. So the importance of folk lore cannot be overlooked. The greatest apostle of Indian culture, Rabindranath Tagore, was aware of its importance He knew that the collection and preservation of folk songs would contribute richly to the revival and invigoration of our culture. He did not think with John L. Mish that folk lore is a fossil which refuses to die. He did what he could to preserve it.

People in the villages are becoming more and more sophisticated and urban-minded They are letting their own original culture go without remorse. Key villages are becoming centres of industry and business Factories are springing up in paddy fields. The old order is changing rapidly, yielding place to the new Farmers' songs do not delight factory workers Folk songs have no patrons They are vanishing as industrialisation advances. Busy as he was with his own creative work Rabindranath found time to collect and preserve

folk songs and he always had time to listen to them. For he believed that in folk songs and folk tales we find the things men have treasured down the ages.

Folk songs have great beauty and charm. Rabindranath was overcome by their melodies. They led him into a new world of songs. *bristhi pade tapur tupur nadey elo ban* held him spell bound. The spell never broke. He quoted the lines in his own essays, using them again and again.

The folk song has no profound philosophy. It is not the creation of a single great poet. Its ideas are often incoherent, it lacks polish and its parts are not skilfully related to each other. Some lines are quite meaningless. But people remember them. Why ? It is a perennial source of joy. Its lilt, its rhythm, and its tempo embody the simple direct feelings of the human heart. Artifice is given second place. Its taste is different, its flavour is different and the sentiments it expresses are different from those of highly cultivated self-conscious poetry. It is unpremeditated, spontaneous oral composition, simple and natural with a sweetness all its own. It stirs in us the same emotions that stirred our forefathers and in so doing unites us to them by closer ties. There are emotional reasons for preserving folk song and folk lore as a part of our national heritage.

They need not be stored away like museum pieces. They are dynamic and full of vitality. They bear strong family ties, intimacy of feeling, memories and dreams, things too deep for tears. They deserve to be preserved with the utmost care and reverence.

Rabindranath knew that folk songs can be fruitfully studied from many points of view, social, historical, ethnological and linguistic. But his own approach was not that of the scholar or the critic. Children's folk songs are too delicate and tender to bear such dissection. To study them critically was, in his opinion, like summoning a shy young girl to court and

subjecting her to gruelling cross-examination, in public. His approach was appreciative. He looked at them with the poetic tenderness of a lover, a romantic. They were personal. He made no comparisons and evolved no theories. He loved and enjoyed them to his heart's content. Through the alchemy of his creativeness they took on a new colour and new life. He exposed their inner beauty in a unique manner, drawing public attention to them He was a pioneer in this line.

The study of folk lore follows three methods. They are: 1) collection of data as found, 2) comparison of data to determine similarities and differences between several ethnic groups and 3) the ascertaining of the social and psychological impulses which have produced the data.

Rabindranath followed the first and, to a lesser extent, the third. His interest was literary So the question of studying folk lore from the geographical, historical and ethnological points of view did not arise It is to his credit that he recorded many variations of the same song and said that all its forms should be preserved even though it is now not possible to determine which form was the original one. It would have been helpful to scholars if he had noted down the places where he found the songs

Rabindranath's collection is not a large one There are in all some 81 songs He did not have the time to make a larger collection And his efforts were directed mainly to one class of folk song, i e, children's nursery rhymes. These are the songs sung by tender young mothers and boys and girls in their village games Swing songs, ballads, boatmen's songs, cartmen's songs, songs of ploughmen are all outside the scope of his collection Of its kind, however, it is the choicest in India

Though some of the lines in these songs appear to be nonsense we actually find in them a child's imagination playing freely with his ideas A journey by boat, a fishing trip, a

mother's anxiety for the safe return of her child and her imaginary preparations for his or her marriage without a thought of budgeting, a mother's delight in her child's dancing, a child cowherd leading a cow out to pasture. The cow is named 'Smile' and the child is happily covered with dust. A mother makes a flute for her son. A harassed mother tries to control an intractable child. The tearful parting of a daughter from her parents as she leaves for her husband's home. All these are conveyed with a fine economy of words and profound understanding.

'āge kānde mābāp pichhe kānde par'

(the mother and father are the first to weep. Then others too begin to cry.)

'kiser māshi kiser pishi kiser brindāvan
ata dine janilām ma bado dhan'

(Mother is the greatest treasure. What are aunts or Brindavan compared to her).

'dhanke niye vanke jabo shekhane khabo ki
nirale basiya chander mukh nirekhi'

(I'll take my treasure to the forest. Food shall not worry me. All by myself I'll sit and gaze upon his moon-like face).

Rabindranath states clearly that his collection was not confined to Bengal. Some of his songs were found in neighbouring provinces, particularly border areas. This accounts for the presence of a number of dialect words. Some of his songs are from Contai in the district of Midnapore. My collection of similar songs from the same area corroborates the fact. The language spoken in this area is considered to be dialect of Oriya.

Let me give here an example which will illustrate the similarity which exists between Oriya and this mixed Oriya-Bengali dialect.

Bengali : Jādu e to baḍo raṅga e to baḍo raṅga
cār rāṅgā dekhāte pāro jābo tomār saṅga
jabā rāngā, karabi rāngā, rāngā kusum phul
tāhār adhik rāngā kanye tomār māthār sindur.

Jādu, e to baḍo ranga e to baḍo raṅgo
cār dhalo dekhāte pāro jābo tomār saṅga
bak dhalo, bastra dhalo, dhalo rājhaṃsa
tāhār adhik dhalo kanye tomār hāter Śaṅkho.

Jādu, e to bado raṅga e to baḍo rango
cār kālo dekhāte pāro jābo tomār sanga
kāk kālo, kokil kālo, kālo phinger beś
tāhār adhik kālo kanye tomār māthār keś.

Oriya : Raanga rangani e duhen ranga lo
ranga to phula mandāra
āhuri jebe tu ranga pacārilu
cadheiāṇi lo tohori mathā sindhura.

ranga cāri chānda kahilu nāgara
tu mora jībara dhana
dhaḷā cāri chānda jebe kahibure
jāci bhunjāibi pāna.

Dhoaba dhobali e duhen dhoba lo
dhoba ta rajānka hamsa
āhuri dhoba tu jebe pacārilu
cadheiāṇi lo
tohori pindhilā bāsa.

dhoba cāri chānda kahilu nāgara
tu mora jibara dhana

kaḷā cāri chānda jebe kahibure
jāci debi jaubana.
kaaḷā kalā e duhen kaḷā lo
kalā ta bila mainsi
āhuri jebe tu kaḷā pacārilu
cadhāieni lo
tohori mundara kesa.

English : Jadu, magician ! This is lot of fun.
If you can show me four red things
I shall go with you. Oleanders are red,
Red the hibiscus and red the *kusum* flower,
But redder than all, girl, is the red
In the parting of your hair.

Jadu, magician ! This is lot of fun.
If you can show me four white things
I shall go with you. Herons are white,
Clothes are white and white is the swan
But whiter all, girl, is the white
Bracelet of shell on your arm.

Jadu, magician ! This is the lots of fun !
If you can show me four black things
I shall go with you. Crows are black,
The cuckoo is black and black is the *phinge* bird
But blacker than all, girl, is the blackness
of the hair on your head.

This is the English rendering of Bengali piece. In spite of the striking resemblances, we see a bit of difference between the two pieces The erotic sentiment is more apparent in the Oriya song. It constitutes a dialogue between a hunter and his

wife The lady love offers each time her choice presentation and lastly she offers her youth after getting correct answers regarding the colour.

Rabindranath's love for the songs of the bauls is well-known He drew inspiration from them for his own philosophy and some of his songs are based on theirs Folk nursery rhymes also inspired him and they are background out of which he composed his lovely songs and poems for children.

The poet was born and brought up in the biggest city of India but he had great admiration and love for the villagers and their ways. Folk literature had been grossly neglected by Indian scholars and was generally regarded as beneath notice. Rabindranath gave it the honorable place which rightfully belongs to it No university has even yet given it a place on the regular curriculum. Folk lorists still work against great odds. Not even the Sahitya Akademi has come forward to help them What Rabindranath did in this line should point the way for others to follow.

In summing up we may say Rabindranath discovered the folk song. He absorbed its spirit and recreated it in his own work for in it he found the highest religion of man, the universal and eternal emotions of the human heart. In it the abstract becomes concrete, the meaningless takes on meaning, the negative becomes positive in a life-giving, joy-giving way. Here we find Rabindranath the universalist, the humanist, voicing the experience of the humble people who have suffered in silence down the centuries, unregarded and disregarded.

RABINDRANATH AND INDIAN LITERATURES

DEBESH DAS

FOR ASSESSING his influence over other Indian literatures, languages and currents of thought we need not recount his triumphant journeys through the whole of India, his deep overwhelming personality which came into contact with the great literary figures of all Indian languages, the homage rendered unto him, the blessings pouring from him His all pervading influence was the spontaneous product of the great concept of India he unfolded before the country.

The India of his dream, of his 'sadhana' is not merely a geographical entity forged into a political unity, an imposition for the external which exposes its internal divisions at every stress and strain. In his words "those who desire external equality, want to level the path to its goal by pushing the steam-roller on the variety of languages. But you cannot make a lotus (satadal) by only mincing and smashing up five flowers.... The external oneness is creation ; that is the unity." In the field of languages and literature also he offered the same concept of one country, one intellectual soil. Not any artificial boundary line on the geographical map, but the infinity of the soul was the soil in which flowered his conception of man and his portrayal in literature. So the literature Tagore created, the language in which he clothed it, the divinely dreams he dreamt transcended the borders of Bengal and the barrier of Bengali and descended on the whole of India like a body of heavenly light. It had a message as ancient as the Vedic hymns and yet as modern as his latest lyrics.

About sixty years back during the session of the Indian National Congress Rabindranath invited to his house the distinguished patriots from all over India assembled at Calcutta for the occasion. The poet celebrated it in a way entirely his own. Most of them did not know Bengali but their heart must

be reached. So he composed a Bengali song in a language which could be understood by all Indians :

"Oee Bhubana-mono-mohini". He was always the bard of India whether he joined the National movement or renounced the rare honour of those days i. e. the Knighthood, or started the new educational system or devoted himself to rural reconstruction. Others caught their spark of inspiration from him, often invisibly and sometimes unconsciously. Thir reminds me of an occasion not long past. Two leaders of worldwide importance visited India and so a song was specially composed by a notable non-Bengali poet in his language to be sung in a mammoth public meeting. Streams of stirring music in magical cadence poured out. We were all attention and admiration. And we discovered the word pictures, metres and music of Tagore unmistakably in the new song. But there was apparently no plagiarism in this It is not imitation but the unconscious expression of a conscious impression in the new poet's whole existence.

It was only Rabindranath who could say, "Let the heart of Bengal spread out to all countries in all ages , let the message of Bengal be the message of all nations and the eternal man. Our hymn of Vande Mataram is not the adoration of Bengal. It is the salutation of the universal mother... We shall go on singing the song of the Man supreme on the road of the God of Man.... We shall accept as our country the very path of the great universe."

Gilbert Murray wrote of Rabindranath that he has given us a message that intimately belongs to our heart but of which none of us is conscious. Though he wrote this with reference to the Western world, it is this elemental and yet eternal something that has brought Rabindranath into the innermost heart of India also

Though Rabindranath's impact on contemporary Bengali

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Narmada in the silver swell of the backwaters of

the boatman singing, "amar sonar Kerala, ami tomae bhalobashi"; in the Rajput recitations from *Katha O Kahini* in the desert sand dunes of Rajasthan; in the sighs of girls with education but without emancipation in the cloistered homes of Western India:

> "I am a commonplace girl
> You won't know me"
>
> *   *   *
>
> Alas, for the commonplace girl
> Alas, for the wastage of God's potential";

in the ardent whisper of Kashmir youths gazing at the golden glimmer of snows suffused with the sun rise over the Pir Panjal ranges:

> "The last sun of the century is sinking in the blood-red clouds of the West and in the whirlwind of hate"
>
> *   *   *
>
> "The crimson glow of light on the horizon is not the light of thy dawn of peace, my motherland".

If an instance from more preminent spheres of life is wanted I would recall the life story of a then unknown youth of Karnataka who started learning Bengali, like many other great Indians, so that he could read the Gitanjali and with a mind enriched with idealism and nationalism he became a great patriot and litterateur, a statesman and Minister and Governor. I apologise humbly this identity can no longer be concealed.

Such instances from personal knowledge and intimate encounters with eminent writers and ordinary rural folk from all over India can be multiplied. More than any exhaustive quotations and elaborate researches in the texts, trends and tests of Indian literatures these bring home to us what he has meant and will continue to mean to us and our literature.

literature was pronounced long before the Nobel Prize award it was this event which catapulted him into the orbit of world observation and also into the revelation that here was the seer and creator the heart of India was thirsting for. Was he the great one the country was awaiting? The question did not need an answer.

Most certainly it was not the gratification that India was revered in him nor the misconception that he was the most western Indian poet, that brought him into the heart of the country. The country awoke to discover that it had found its song in him. What Count Keyserling wrote about him fully expresses what an Indian also would say: "Herewith I come to a poet who meant much, immeasurably much to me; Rabindranath Tagore. He was a creator... who first sang the forests and the stars whereby they came into being." This book is named *Travel Through Time*. No more appropriate name could have been given to this description of Tagore, his journey into eternity.

Year after year in course of the annual conferences held in different parts of India under the auspices of the Nikhil Bharat Banga Sahitya Sammelan we have seen how intimately the leaders of thought, the great writers of those regions have spontaneously acknowledged their reverence for and indebtedness to Tagore. It is unnecessary for me to explain, by quoting chapters and verses how his influence permeated through and through all over India. No, it was not an influence, but an inspiration.

In state after state we have had intimate confessions of eminent writers of different literatures how they had been influenced and inspired by Rabindranath. This inspiration I have found echoed and re-echoed in the outpourings of Rabindra-Sangit in the shadow of the Marble Rocks of the Narmada in the silver swell of the backwaters of Kerala with

If we could ask Rabindranath, he would probably have only smiled. But the answer to this query lives in this quatrain of his :

> The Flower cries out, fruit, oh, fruit,
> Tell me how far you are ,
> The fruit says, why this shout
> I live in your heart for ever.

I remember yet more anonymous instance. During the disastrous evacuation from Burma fleeing crowds of educated prosperous Indians, originally belonging to different provinces look to the forbidding and often fatal trek to India through the "green hell." Quite a few non-Bengalis have confided to me the great solace recitations from Tagore had brought to them during the journey. I recall the story of the great French poet, Comptess de nouilles and the celebrated French Premier, M. Clemenceau who sought refuge in the songs of the Gitanjali when the First world war declared and France instinctively felt where she stood. Recall also the note book of the young English poet Wilfred Owen who was shelled to death on the very Armistice Day in 1918 when he had copies in the note-book consoling lines from Rabindranath. How can I forget my last meeting with a celebrated Hindi poet on his death bed who defied mortal pain to whisper cheerfully "More marane tomar habe jai ?"

To turn to life from death. Said Andre Gide, another Nobel Laureate, "to me his poetry is the testament of a great visionary who looked at life with serenity...His poems are echoes from a distant world, caressing our ears that have grown tired (almost to the point of deafness) of the tumult of our violent age..." But often in the first flush of youth we welcome this tumult as a divine discontent and yearn for something new and intensely our own. Young writers in Bengal and elsewhere have often deliberately tried to shake off the influence of Tagore. In a spirit of revolt they have tried to get away from him, his ideas and ideals, expressions and interpretations. This very conscious effort is the silent and irrefutable proof of the spell he has had over writers in all Indian literatures. Poets with remarkable talents and originality have made efforts to break away from this spell, to consciously abjure his imageries and vocabulary and have in despair enquired how to succeed.

touched every part of it and made it glow. This is not a vague phrase — that he made every part of life glow...

I may recount the fact that when I came to Santiniketan in the year 1938, I happened to go on the way here to the Botanical Gardens of Calcutta. I remember very vividly the feeling of exuberance, of the warm, lush sap of life that I felt among the trees there. I felt that my blood was flowing and I was alive. Shortly after that I visited Santiniketan and I recall that a sudden love of life opened up in my heart and mind. And I was reminded of the poet's confession of the time when he was awakened suddenly to lovely nature. I cannot say that I can understand the extraordinary depth and range of his experience, from which he began to write, after his awakening But I can say that this love of life, which awakens in one, is the proper key to the understanding of the fullness of man and the poet of the range of Rabindranath Tagore. There are moments in human life when you love life itself. This love of life is, in my opinion, the inner urge of poetry. Without this love of life, without the apperception of tenderness in life, poetry is not possible. This extraordinary love, this love of life, is, then, the core of Rabindranath's genius It was this awakening which brought us those riches, the profound and subtle penetrations of his genius. This love of life naturally means hatred of death And he hated all forms of destruction This made him unpopular in the world for a time Please do not imagine that Rabindranath was loved by every one. He loved life too much to be loved by small understanding men And, because in his life, he condemned those who destroy life, he was often despised.

There is evidence for this extraordinary tenderness in his novels I don't know any novelist in our country who has communicated so effectively, the feeling of tenderness, the

RABINDRANATH TAGORE — THE WHOLE MAN

MULK RAJ ANAND

I AM very happy to be here, especially because I have not been well for some months and could not got about. But I would have been unhappy if I had not been able to join in these celebrations.

I may as well start by telling you that I would not have been here at all, and I could not have been a writer, if it was not for the inspiration of the poet Rabindranath Tagore. I would not have written a single line in my life, if I had not just by chance got hold of an early novel of the poet when I was eleven years old.

This genius of our time, who was here 20 years ago, where I came to see him, who blessed us, who talked to us, who was near to us, so that we could say "yes, yes. I am here in the presence of this great man", — this man was a giant and an immortal. And now he seems so near and so far. On the one hand, it appears as though he was living 200 years ago, among the medieval saints of India or 2000 years ago. Reference is often made to the extra-ordinary kinship between his poetry and that of Kalidasa, and it is quite likely that the ring of his words is certainly and authentically of the classical period. But it is important to realise that he was essentially of our time. Actually, he brought us into touch with the Upanishads and modern philosophy at the same time. And that is rather like a miracle.

In this context we will have to go to the sources and find out how he made the past relevant to our time

Comparisons have also been made, in recent times, between Tagore and Hugo, Goethe, Heine and Whiteman. But I think the comparison with Leonardo da Vince is the more appropriate. For here was a comprehensive genius who, like Leonardo, summed up in his personality almost the whole of life. He

Tagore much more than of Gandhi. Politically, he said "I am the heir of Gandhi, but, spiritually, I feel much more kinship with Tagore." No one in this country has spoken a truer word on behalf of us all, for we are the spiritual heirs of Tagore. Without Tagore the modern Indian consciousness would not be flowering. We do homage to Tagore because he was no, less than Leonardo, the 'whole-man' and he was the 'whole man' because he had courage to go beyond those poets, those philosophers, those educationists, those craftsmen, who think that the past is all and that all our thinking has been done for us. If, of course, to live in the image of Tagore is to do much more than our cowardice will allow us to do, it means that we should be able often say to those who are in power where they are wrong. Even in a centenary function, which is sponsored by the Government of India, one should not be frightened to say to our benign government, "Look, Tagore was your teacher and you have forgotten his message".

I visited Sriniketan to-day and saw what the Government of India has done in rural reconstruction work from this centre. I hope the authorities will have the grace to acknowledge, when they send people to be trained in the manner in which Tagore thought, that it was Tagore, who has taught us all the meaning of rural reconstruction.

Tagore was aware of the extraordinary destructive capacity of greed in human civilization. In his last message, published in the book *Towards the Universal Man* it is quite clear that he raised his voice against the profit-making civilisation of the West. In his lectures on *Nationalism* he warned Japan against the path of destruction through profit-making, on which it was going; he warned the East against militarism and aggression. These warnings are important for us as the threat of a nuclear war faces mankind.

delicacy, the refinement and the devotion of Indian women. I can never forget Anandamayee, the dominant woman in *Gora* I can never forget the tormented heroine of *Ghare-Baire*. Or the two women in *Nauka-Dubi*. Those women were communicating angels who made us cross the barriers, which made the new generations of women in Bengal. It will be a very important part of our work to try to take from Tagore those women and exalt them as the ideal type of Indian woman.

The themes on which Tagore wrote are modern and of our time—they answer the fundamental question of the meaning of life, in our time.

Tagore was a humanist. He was one of the greatest humanists of our country and the world. He taught whole generations of the country to be humanists, not vaguely, but by creating, in his novels, those characters, those human beings, who are so real in their weaknesses. He conferred a certain dignity on weakness. He made the tormented obscure people so beautiful that one wants to know and to love them. Thus his is more than a mere philosophical humanism. His humanism is evident in the courage to inspire and to lead weak peoples through critical periods.

This brings us to the question of the commitment of writers. Those of us, who learnt our lessons from him during the 1914-1919 war, will admit that writers are engaged—they are committed. Tagore was committed, not partially but wholly. He was responsible for the free India, as much a Gandhi and Jawaharlal are responsible for the free India. Perhaps Tagore was also responsible for a bigger freedom than that which Gandhi and Nehru have given us... .. Some of you, who were in Bombay at the time of the first conference of the centenary, will remember how moving was the speech of Jawaharlal Nehru. He confessed that he was the spiritual heir of

OUR CONTRIBUTORS

1. K. M. Munshi — President of the Bharatiya Vidya-Bhavan. An eminent Gujrati writer. Author of a number of books.
2. Sant Singh Sekhan — Educationist and Punjabi writer.
3. Trilochan Singh — Punjabi writer and translater.
4. B. V. (Mama) Warerkar — Eminent Marathi dramatist and has translated the works of Sarat Ch. Chatterjee, Bankim Ch. Chatterjee and Rabindranath Tagore into Marathi.
5. G. Khanolkar — Talented Marathi writer. Has writen on Tagore.
6. G. Sankara Kurup — An eminent Malayalese writer. His publications include poems & plays.
7. C. Kunhan Raja — An eminent scholar in Sanskrit. Author of a number of Research Publications.
8. Uma Sankar Joshi — Director of the School of Gujrat Language and Literature, Gujrat University. An eminent Gujrati writer. Author of a number of books.
9. Ratna Kanta Barkakati — Eminent Assamese writer. His publications include poems and plays.
10. Kalindi Charan Panigrahi — Eminent Oriya writer His publications include short-stories, essays and poems.

The 'whole man' that was Tagore evolved a religion of man. Certainly, after the Buddha, the greatest humanism of Asia was founded by Tagore. The message of this humanism is the message of beauty and tenderness. Our task is to spread this message by translating Tagore's works, not merely in the fourteen major languages but also in two hundred eighty dialects of our country and in the thousand languages of the world.

I wish to confess to you that, not during this year, but ever since I met the poet in Europe (about 30 years ago), I decided that if I could not build up an Educational Institution like that of Visva-Bharati, I would at least build a small primary school. This school will soon be built up in Maharasthra in a small mountain village. I would like to consider this primary school as a dedication to the ideals that the poet stood for......

Let us burn a few lights of our own from the big lamp which Tagore lit for us.

11. Gopi Nath Mohanty	—	Talented novelist and writer of Orissa.
12. J. Kaul	—	Retired Professor of English Literature. Eminent Kasmiri writer. His publications include important works in English.
13. R. F. Gorokhpuri	—	Eminent Urdu poet & writer
14. Ram Panjwani	—	Professor and Head of the Department of Sindhi Literature, Jai Hind College, Bombay. Author of a number of books.
15. Hashoo Kewal Ramani	—	Eminent journalist and a popular story-writer.
16. K. Chandrasekaran	—	Eminent Tamil writer. Has published a number of books.
17. T. N. Kumarswami	—	Eminent Tamil writer. Has translated *Gora* and other novels of Tagore into Tamil.
18. G. V. Sitapati	—	Eminent Telegu writer.
19. Hazari Prasad Dwivedi	—	Prof. & Head of the Department of Hindi, East Punjab University, Chandigarh. Author of a number of books.
20. Adya Rangacharya	—	An eminent Kanarese writer. His publications include novels & plays.
21. Sashi Bhusan Das Gupta	—	Professor and Head of the Department of Bengali, Calcutta University. His publications include important research works.

22. Hare Krishna Mukhopadhyaya — An eminent scholar in Vaishanavism. Author of a number of books.

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૧૫ દિવસ : આ પુસ્તક વધુમાં વધુ ૧૫ દિવસ માટે રાખી શકાશે.

12 DEC 1990			

